AMERICAN ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW.

NEW SERIES—VOL. I.—(XI.)—SEPTEMBER, 1894.—NO. 3.

PARISH MISSIONS.

BY A FRANCISCAN FATHER.

ONE of the most important points in the line of pastoral duties and of the salvation of souls, no doubt, is the giving, periodically, of what is called a mission. The office of the Church—of her consecrated ministers—ever since the commission of Christ to the Apostles of going throughout the whole world and of preaching the Gospel to all nations, was and is of a missionary nature—an embassy, representative of Almighty God and directed to the whole world—for the purpose of its salvation.

The scope of this article is not a discussion of the missionary work of the Church among the heathens or among people separated from the Church, but an essay on Parish Missions, conducted by her through the medium of her missionaries, among her own children and for their benefit, that is to say, for the conversion of sinners, for the arousing of the lukewarm, and the improvement and perseverance of her good and devout children. Hence it follows that the making of converts, though most desirable and gratifying to the heart of the missionary and that of the pastor, is not the primary or main object of a parish mission, and that its success or failure must not be judged or gauged, at least not chiefly, by this standard.

A mission always is and must be pronounced successful whenever through its influence the sinners, public or occult, are converted, the tepid and indifferent Christians are aroused to fervor and the good are made still better; whenever, in a word, a new Christianlike spirit is infused into the congregation. And if this three-fold end is not realized, the

mission, no matter how much eulogized otherwise, is a failure.

There is need of a mission in a parish whenever, in the prudent judgment of the pastor, an extraordinary impulse and grace is required to revive or to stimulate the dormant Christian faith and piety of his flock, to arouse those, that under ordinary circumstances and by the usual efforts of his ministry, can hardly be aroused—to revalidate defective or bad confessions, to uproot deep-seated evil habits, or to make up for deficiencies or defects of his ordinary "cura animarum," and to reach those that are and keep beyond the reach of their own pastor, or fail, for some reason or other, to heed his pastoral admonitions.

An extraordinary cause, as a rule, will bring about extraordinary results. A mission, no doubt, is a time of extraordinary divine grace and of effort on the part of men, and hence must and (all parties concerned doing their very best) will be crowned with extraordinary results, sometimes even surpassing the most sanguine expectations of the parish priest. Whatever and whoever can not be gained by means of a mission, can hardly ever, as daily experience proves, be gained at any other time.

There are to be found, sometimes, extraordinary local or exceptional conditions of affairs in parishes, when besides the general conditions calling for a mission, there exist special, local or personal reasons for a revival. Such, in the writer's humble opinion, would exist when a parish has been newly established or organized; when it has been shocked by public scandals; when a new church or parochial school must be built, whilst the Catholic people are indifferent or unreasonably opposed to it; or when the material temple has been completed; on occasion of a jubilee, or when local evils cannot be successfully combated by the customary efforts of the pastor; when the people are estranged from or unjustly opposed to their pastor and there is hope of a mutual reconciliation. But in any case the object of the pastor, as well as of the missionary, in getting up a mission must be the spiritual welfare of the people, and nothing else.

The question might be asked here: How frequently ought a mission to take place in a parish?

Of course, there is on this, as well as on nearly all other matters, a difference of opinion, of theory and of practice. Thanks to God, the priests who from principle are opposed to missions are few, and, to be sure, there would be none if they had only once or twice gone along on missions, and in the confessional, on these occasions, had observed the good done by missions. I honestly believe that millions of souls now in the glory of heaven would have been lost forever if it had not been for a mission. But, at the same time, it must be admitted, a good thing can be overdone. If a mission is given regularly every other year, it is bound to lose its novelty and attraction, and cannot, for obvious reasons, be expected to make so deep and lasting an impression, to yield so rich a harvest, as would be the case if it were of less frequent occurrence. *Ne quid nimis!*

On the other hand, a mission ought not to be unreasonably long delayed. From every five to seven years a mission ought to be preached in every organized parish, and the statutes of some dioceses of this country would seem to justify this assertion.

How long ought a mission to last?

The length or duration of a mission, no doubt, must largely depend upon circumstances, but nevertheless, it may be laid down as a rule that it ought not to last much less than a week nor exceed the space of two weeks. The mission ought to close whilst the enthusiasm of the people is at its highest point, and they are wishing it might last a week longer. To close when they begin to feel tired of it does not seem to be good policy.

If a mission is to last two weeks, it is advisable to divide the sexes, *i. e.*, to devote one week to the women and the other to the men.

As every one knows, this is frequently done, but it may appear doubtful whether this method is the best that could be adopted. In that case, the missionaries address only one-half of the congregation at a time, whereas they might just

as well, if the capacity of the church and other circumstances will permit, have the whole or nearly the whole parish listen to their discourses. Not to mention other reasons, much better results can, and as a general rule will be achieved, if all the members, both male and female, of the parish attend the mission for two weeks in succession.

HOW MANY MISSIONARIES OUGHT TO CONDUCT THE MISSION?

The labors of one missionary, no matter what his qualifications, can hardly be called a mission. Unless the congregation consists of a very limited number of families, there never ought to be less than two. Our dear Lord Himself never sent less than two of His disciples to preach. For a parish of a hundred to two hundred families two missionaries will do, and for every additional hundred families, the services of one more missionary ought to be secured. As a rule, a missionary ought not to be expected to deliver more than one mission sermon a day. Apart from this regard for the missionaries, the people ought to be supplied with a sufficient number and choice of confessors. Two hundred and fifty to three hundred general confessions is all a missionary ought to hear at a mission of one week's duration.

The object of the mission being the conversion, reformation and improvement of the people, the sermons and discourses preached during the mission must be adapted to that end. They ought to be such in character, style and delivery, as to terrify the sinner, to awaken the lukewarn and to sanctify the pious and devout Christians. Hence, as is obvious, they ought not to be exclusively dogmatical, instructive, much less controversial, because no matter how good in themselves, instructions and discourses of this kind will fail to arouse the people to that pitch of enthusiasm and to that change of heart and life, which the mission is intended to bring about. It seems to me they ought to resemble, in substance at least, the meditations of the retreat, though, of course, they will differ from them in style, form and manner because a mission is a retreat for the people.

WHAT ABOUT SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS AND CONFERENCES FOR THE DIFFERENT STATES OF LIFE?

On this matter again there exists a difference of opinion: but, to be candid, I honestly believe there are ten reasons for, to one against these particular instructions, intended for and given exclusively to one particular state of life. No one of any experience can doubt that in our days of laxity of morals, instructions for married people, for instance, are not only timely, but absolutely necessary, in order to guard and prevent them from the ways and practices of modern heathens. But how can such delicate matters be safely treated before a mixed audience or conveniently at any other time? To reserve them for the confessional is impracticable, because of the want of time. Not only will the people, during a mission, be ready to humbly receive these instructions touching upon all the duties of their particular state of life, they will oftentimes even express their gratitude and appreciation of the information received. And as to the good effect of these important instructions, let those speak who have assisted in hearing confessions on missions where such instructions were given.

At missions, the people, with the exception of scrupulous souls, ought to be urged to make a general confession, because of the alarming multitude of former doubtful, invalid and sacrilegious confessions, and because a real genuine conversion, a thorough and lasting change of life, as a rule, dates from the day of such a general confession. It may be safely said, a mission that does not yield this fruit is not very successful.

The time for the making of the general confession ought not to be set too early—for instance, the very first days of the mission,—because the people at that early period are not sufficiently prepared. Nor does it seem advisable to put off the confessions to the very last—say, the last or second last day of the mission—because then there will be a rush, and the number of available confessors being generally limited, it will be next to impossible to do justice to the crowd of peni-

tents. It would seem that the time most suitable for the general confessions would be at or after the middle of the mission, one day (or more) being assigned to each particular state, after the particular instruction and those sermons that serve as a preparation for confession have been given.

IS ONE CONFESSION SUFFICIENT?

Generally speaking, one confession made after careful preparation on the part of the penitent and with due assistance of the confessor, is sufficient. Still it oftentimes, or at least sometimes happens, that the penitent afterwards remembers, or in subsequent discourses is reminded of something that at the time of confession escaped his memory, and now disquiets his conscience. Though the formal integrity required by divine law of confession was complied with, it lacked material integrity, and the penitent's conscience is not at rest. Now, in this case, he ought not to be denied the opportunity of a second confession.

Since a mission is to reform not only individual members of the parish, but also the parish as such, which is the proper way and method to combat and to abolish local public evils that may exist in a parish?—Are they to be attacked directly?

Evils of this kind may be intemperance, gambling, prostitution or kindred immoralities, sinful parties and dances, enmities, neglect of divine service, of Catholic education, mixed marriages, opposition to the pastor, and the like. It seems to me, as a rule, from which there may be on account of circumstances exceptions, that it is the best and safest policy for the missionary to attack these vices not directly, but indirectly, and in order to avoid the creation of prejudice against himself, the pastor and the mission, not even to insinuate that he has knowledge of their existence to any great extent in the parish. The mission hardly ever produces a good effect when the missionaries give the people to understand that they have a poor or a bad opinion of them. Surely this is not a *captatio benevolentiae.*

At a mission it is customary to organize or re-organize societies and to establish confraternities. They are, indeed, a powerful means to preserve and perpetuate the good work of the mission. It is very much to be desired that the whole parish should be divided up into societies and that each society should have its own special Sunday for monthly Communion and meeting. A congregation without these church societies may be compared to a fruit-tree devoid alike of blossom and fruit. Still it is not necessary to enlarge upon the usefulness of societies to the parish. But, if ever, the mission is the time when the parishioners will be ready to join them. They might also be urged by the missionaries to become members of some or other confraternity approved by the Church. All ought to be enrolled in that of the Scapular. The Confraternity or League of the Sacred Heart is becoming more and more popular. The Third Order of St. Francis, so strongly recommended by the Sovereign Pontiff (a Tertiary himself), can easily be introduced on occasion of a mission. Perhaps more than anything else the Third Order will serve to foster in the parish the spirit of genuine Christian piety. In all his missionary travels and labors between ocean and ocean, the writer never struck a more devout and more pious congregation, than one in the Central States. The parish priest was a most enthusiastic advocate and promoter of the Third Order, and three hundred and forty souls belonged and lived up to the rule of the Third Order of St. Francis. Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos. But no matter how good all these things, it is not advisable to introduce too many confraternities in a parish. Again, ne quid nimis!

With regard to converts, we may be permitted to repeat what was said in the beginning, that the making of them is not the main point or object of the parish mission. Still the conversion to the true faith of non-Catholics is one of its most consoling results. The serious truths announced during the mission can hardly fail to make a deep impression upon people not altogether devoid of the religious element and who perhaps never before heard anything like them from

the lips of their ministers. Urged alike by the voice of divine grace and the persuasion of their Catholic friends and neighbors, they may come and ask to be received into the Church.

Still, we consider it a serious mistake to admit them without a due course of probation, instruction and preparation. And how can the missionary, during the few hours he might possibly have of leisure, impart a thorough knowledge and understanding of Catholic truth! This is next to impossible. If these converts, who at the mission are apt to embrace the Catholic religion on the spur of the moment, through emotion rather than conviction, are at once received into the Church, what is generally the outcome? Like a straw fire, their religious enthusiasm will soon die away, they will frequently turn out renegades, or almost always be found anything but exemplary Christians, a poor acquisition to the Church. Surely, converts should not be discouraged or turned away, but let them be turned over to the hands of the pastor for the purpose of a full and complete course of instruction.

To insure success, not only the missionaries, but also the parochial clergy must do their full duty. The success or failure of a mission, in many cases, is largely to be attributed to them.

The resident clergy's co-operation is needed before, during and after the mission. No need to prove this assertion. All that is required is to point out in what way or manner that co-operation is to be rendered.

First of all the pastor must be a man inflamed with the zeal for souls, having at heart the good of his flock, and seeking to promote it by all available means; and one of them, perhaps the most powerful of all, is the grace of a holy mission. It is an incontrovertible fact that the best priests and pastors of souls are in favor of missions, and that a priest indifferent or even opposed to them cannot be called a very zealous one. The next thing in the line of the pastor's co-operation will be the appointment of the proper time when the mission is to take place. In this matter he must be careful not to consult his own convenience but the interests of his people, and to make due allowance for the conditions and

particular circumstances of his parishioners. A mission is out of place at a time of the year when, owing to the inclemency of the season, of extreme cold or heat, or to the bad state of roads, or to the pressure of unavoidable business, or such similar circumstances, the people cannot, at least not reasonably, be expected to attend from beginning to the end. It is the pastor's place, unless done so by higher authority, to select the missionaries whom he wishes to conduct the exercises of the mission, and to apply in due season to the proper authorities. A priest cannot expect to have missionaries sent at a moment's notice, hence application for missionaries ought to be made at least some months previous to the time and date it is desired to have the mission. And this application ought to be directed, not to the missionaries themselves, but to their respective superiors. It is also desirable not to have the same missionaries, nor even missionaries of the same Order or Community at each and every mission. "Varietas delectat."

More than this. One set or class of missionaries might do better at this time or place, and another might be preferable under different circumstances. The services of the missionaries secured, the parish priest ought, in due season, to apply to the bishop of the diocese for faculties needed by missionaries. The ordinary or usual faculties given to priests oftentimes prove inadequate to the work and object of the mission, hence more extensive faculties, more ample powers ought to be asked. Generally these faculties, so essential to the complete success of the missionary work, will be most cheerfully granted, but, alas! the writer is aware of some instances wherein the faculty of absolving parties who had married out of the Church, was positively denied. How embarrassing to the missionary when, after having from the pulpit invited these poor sinners to return, he must in the confessional, for the lack of faculties, turn them away,—knowing that they will be discouraged, as is frequently the case, from making another attempt to be forgiven. It would seem to stand to reason that, if ever, parties in need of the benefit of special faculties will, at the time of a mission, be disposed to seek pardon and ready to repair the scandal

given. Again, it is difficult to be obliged to apply for faculties for each individual case during the progress of the mission. And what can be done if at the very close of the mission such a reserved case should present itself? May it not even happen that the refusal of the faculty in question, and the necessity of application in each particular, individual case, will create, besides many other inconveniences, a danger of violatio sigilli! But videant consules! Salus animae suprema lex esto!

The parish clergy, furthermore, ought to prepare the way by repeated announcement from the pulpit and otherwise, of the mission to be given, and by frequent allusion in their sermons to its necessity, importance and blessings. Much, indeed, depends upon this preparation of the people. The parish priest, likewise, ought to have an understanding with the missionaries concerning articles of mission goods to be procured previous to the mission, as well as with regard to everything else required for the mission.

But above all, let it be borne in mind that the principal preparation for a successful mission is made by prayer; hence the zealous pastor will invoke, and urge the people to invoke, by means of daily prayer, God's blessing upon the mission, weeks, perhaps months, previous to the day set for its opening.

During the days of the mission, the parochial clergy are expected to be at their post of duty, for the mission is not the proper time of absence, vacation or leisure for the resident clergy. More than that of any other priest, the presence and assistance of the pastor is required. The idea of the missionaries having full charge of the parish, so as to relieve the parochial clergy of all duty and responsibility during the period of the mission, surely is a mistaken one. The information and counsel to be derived from the clergy upon various matters, that are apt to come up during the progress of the mission, are almost indispensable to the missionaries; whilst the presence and lively interest taken by the clergy serve to edify and encourage the people. What, on the other hand, would they think and say if their priests, during the

mission, would be conspicuous by their absence or indifference. It goes without saying, that on the part of the missionary, parochial or visiting clergy, everything or act that is inconsistent with the spirit, aim and object of the mission, everything that savors of levity, of jealousy or turpis lucri must be carefully avoided.

The sale of mission goods ought to be conducted—not by any of the missionaries who ought to have no hand or personal interest in it, save that of blessing them ; nor by the parochial clergy, but by some competent and reliable parties appointed by the pastor. To guard against the suspicion of profit or the appearance of business, these articles should not be offered for sale at the very beginning or first days of the mission, nor in the church, nor ought they to be too high priced.

Besides attending to everything prescribed by the order of the exercises, and providing for the wants and reasonable comfort of the missionaries, the parochial clergy ought to relieve them of part of the burden that is not exactly their business when giving missions. Such work, for instance, would be the recital with the people of the Rosary, the giving of the Benediction and Communion, recording the members enrolled in a confraternity, and especially the daily Missa Cantata. No reasonable pastor will ask the missionary, whose vocal organs on that occasion are taxed to their utmost capacity, to sing High Mass. There are good reasons why the pastor himself, during the mission, should give Holy Communion. If it happens that some one or other fail to attend the mission, or to approach the Sacraments, the pastor should leave no means unemployed to bring them in. His personal presence in the church or sanctuary, at the various exercises of the mission, is bound to impress the people favorably. To hear confessions during the mission is not expected of the parochial clergy ; but if requested, either by some one or another of his congregation, or by the missionaries, they surely ought not to refuse to lend aid in that direction, and as much as possible act upon the same principle, and in the same spirit as the missionaries.

The co-operation of the parochial clergy, however, must

not cease with the close of the mission, regardless of its success or failure. They ought to continue the good work, to irrigate and to mature the seed planted by the hands of the missionaries. With that view, they ought to treat with the utmost kindness and solicitude the returned prodigal son, never throwing up to him his former disorders. Let the converted sinner feel that, together with the pardon of God, he obtained the unreserved pardon of man. If, as will sometimes happen, after the mission, a straggler will come to unburden his conscience, let him be received with open arms.

For weeks and even months following the mission, the good, zealous pastor in his discourses to his flock will refer to the mission preached, to the instruction received, to the blessings, graces and happiness obtained, to the good resolutions formed and promises made, thus to keep burning in the hearts of his parishioners the fire of religious fervor and divine love, and to lead them to perseverance by inculcating upon their minds the necessity of the use of the means of grace, of prayer of the frequent reception of the holy Sacraments,—and above all, the flight from the approximate occasion of sin. To the societies or confraternities organized by the missionaries, to the converts gained, he must give due care and attention. If during the mission he discovered that his parishioners, in some way or other, had been disedified by his own personal ways and actions, let him be careful to correct them. Above all, let him be extremely cautious in his remarks upon the mission and the missionaries, let him not exhibit the slightest trace of jealousy at praise bestowed by his people, and never encourage or countenance adverse criticism. The writer has charge of a parish where, some years ago, the pastor on the Sunday following the close of the mission, from the pulpit made an indiscreet and imprudent remark, and by so doing almost entirely undid and spoiled the good done by the mission. To keep up the remembrance of those days of grace and salvation, the people ought to be urged frequently to visit the mission cross erected, there to meditate, to pray and to gain the indulgences attached.

And finally, let him not omit to have a renewal of the mission, for a few days at least, if not for a whole week, the following year. If these points are faithfully observed, the parish mission will always, by the grace of God, prove a source of untold blessings to individuals and to whole parishes.

P. VICTOR, O.S.F.

THE GOOD EFFECTS OF PARISH MISSIONS.

BY A REDEMPTORIST MISSIONARY.

I.

THE immense benefits derived from parish missions are too well known to need our comment. The better portion of the parishioners are strengthened in their faith; they learn to appreciate their religion in greater measure and to practice it more cheerfully; they are put on their guard against dangers that threaten them at the present, or may rise up against them in the future. The weaker portion of the congregation is animated to greater fervor; the wayward are brought back; the erring are enlightened; the ignorant are instructed; all classes of sinners are brought to repentance.

NECESSITY OF MISSIONS.

Although everybody seems to understand the great utility of missions being periodically introduced in the parish, but is there a real necessity for them? Many a pastor of souls believes that a mission is a good thing, and he would perhaps make up his mind to have one himself, but owing to some imaginary obstacles, he will wait for some opportune time. He cannot convince himself of the real necessity of a mission, at least as far as his parish is concerned, in which he believes the best order to prevail. "Et hæc cogitaverunt et erraverunt." The writer of this knows from the experience he has gathered in the field of American missions during a period of forty years, how often pastors have deceived themselves in this respect. Of course, when we speak of the

necessity of missions, we do not mean an *absolute* necessity, as though people *could not* be saved without them. People have been, are now, and no doubt will be saved, without having ever had a mission. But what we mean to say is that many souls *will not* be saved without a mission.

There is scarcely a single parish in which some people may not be found who habitually neglect Mass on Sunday and on feasts of obligation, while they could go without any difficulty, or, if there are some obstacles in the way, they could easily overcome them. Such people, if they go to their annual confession, manifest some kind of sorrow when questioned about this point, and promise to amend. And yet, after having attended Mass twice or three times, miss it again the same as before. Next year they make the same promises, and the same relapses follow. Nothing but a good mission will bring these people to a change of their perverse dispositions and make practical Catholics out of them.

And what is said here in regard to missing Mass applies to many other sins that are habitually committed, notwithstanding all the fair promises that are made at the confessional. And is there not good reason to doubt the validity of these confessions?—an evil that is likewise best remedied by a good mission.

In every parish there is a smaller or greater number of such as neglect the sacraments for years, and all the efforts of a zealous pastor, of a solicitous mother or wife, of relations and friends, all the prayers of pious souls, are unavailing to bring them to a reconciliation with God. Nothing but a well conducted mission can bring about their conversion. The plain but forcible exposition of the evil of sin and its terrible consequences on the one hand, and the reflection on the mercy and goodness of God on the other, made to bear upon them by experienced missionaries who know how to deal with that class of people, make an irresistible impression upon their perverted hearts, and, like so many prodigals, they rise to go to their Father.

These and similar effects of missions are seen by many, and they are so many proofs of their necessity. But there

are other reasons why missions are needed. St. Leonard of Porto Mauritio, the famous missionary of the Franciscan Order, used to say that he believed that at least one-third of all the confessions made were bad. The experience which St. Vincent de Paul had in the confessional about the overwhelming number of sacrileges committed, gave him the first thought of establishing the Congregation of the Mission (Lazarists). St. Alphonsus Liguori had the same experience and to meet this great evil properly and to cure it successfully in the mission, he laid down particular rules of action for the missionaries of his Congregation (Redemptorists). But there is no need of going so far back; let all those who have spent a few years on the missions speak from their own personal experience, and they will confirm the unquestionably strong testimony. This evil exists in the best regulated parishes. Many an active and zealous pastor thinks it impossible that his parish can be infected with this plague, because he believes that his people place full confidence in him. Yet the hearts of many people are kept closed over the most heinous crimes, until one or two very plain instructions have been given on this subject, and even then some sins are kept concealed. Missionaries usually have this sad experience at the customary renewal which follows a short time after the mission.

Still another reason why missions are necessary is the general ignorance of Catholics in religious matters. Our people are, as a rule, well educated as far as their temporal interests are concerned, but in regard to religion they know barely enough to be saved. The reason is obvious. There is not enough of religious instruction given to the young while at school. Even in Catholic schools and educational institutions there is more attention paid and more time given to the sciences than to religion. And what little is learned in the school is soon forgotten. We have quite an amount of reading matter in books as well as in papers and periodicals, by which the defect of religious education might in some measure be supplied. But the very people that should read them never look at them. There are also many good

and instructive sermons preached from Sunday to Sunday in many churches both in the cities and in the country, but how many are those that hear a sermon? The five minutes' sermon prescribed by the late Plenary Council should make up for this defect. Often however, it amounts to no more than a protracted announcement about some church affair, or a collection. The mission is badly needed to give at least the most necessary religious knowledge to the people. How many hundreds of Catholics have not been heard saying after attending a mission: "Were it not for this mission I would never have known my religion!"

There is much ignorance prevailing among our Catholics in regard to the precepts of the Church, the law of fast, the law of annual confession and Easter Communion, the necessity of the sacraments and the way to receive them,—but particularly with regard to the Sacrament of Matrimony, the laws of the Church in reference to the most ordinary impediments to matrimony, the way of contracting marriage and the preparation thereto,—not to speak of the most shocking abuses practised in married life, now so common even among Catholics.

Indifferentism in religious matters is growing daily and fixing itself in the hearts of our people. The incessant efforts of the world and the devil are unfortunately but too successful in plunging many into the abyss of infidelity. The mission is a most efficient means in the hands of Divine Providence to keep many back from pursuing the broad way opening before them, and to rescue others from utter perdition. The plain, yet powerful preaching of the eternal truths revives the faith, strengthens it and raises the soul to higher aspirations.

There are yet other reasons why missions are necessary in certain parishes, which we must here pass over in silence.

Missions may be called a special institution of the Church for the reformation of the people. What retreats are to the clergy and to religious communities, that missions are for the people. Many religious orders have made missions part of their special occupation, such as the Order of St. Francis,

the Order of St. Dominic and the Society of Jesus; other religious congregations have been instituted to pursue the work of the missions as the only object of their vocation, such as the Institutes of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Paul of the Cross, and of St. Alphonsus Liguori. The work of these Religious Orders has received the most hearty approbation of the Church. Several Popes of this and the last century, have bestowed the highest encomiums upon the work of parish missions, and have enriched them with many indulgences to make them more attractive. Among others let us hear Benedict XIV :—"Diuturna experientia edocti perspeximus, ad improbos mores corrigendos, qui vel serpere incipiunt, vel nimis jam invalescunt, vel tandem diuturnitate confirmati dioceses latius occuparunt, nihil magis conferre, quam alienam opem ac vires implorare, videlicet Sacras Missiones ubique indicere.—Quo circa neque novum neque incertum dici potest hoc remedium, quod populi corruptelis corrigendis proponitur. Antiquum illud est, malis curandis aptissimum et fortasse unicum, quod tot episcopi pietatis gloria insignes magna cum utilitate in diocesibus adhibuerunt." Bulla "Gravissimum" 8 Sept. 1745.

Pius VI condemned those who call missions an empty noise without effect. "Propositio enuntians, irregularem strepitum novarum institutionum quae dicta sunt exercitia vel missiones . . . forte nunquam aut saltem perraro eo pertingere, ut absolutam conversionem operentur; et exteriores illos commotionis actus, qui apparuere, nil aliud fuisse quam transeuntia naturalis concussionis fulgura;—temeraria, male sonans, perniciosa, mori pie ac salutariter per Ecclesiam frequentato et in verbo Dei fundato injuriosa." —Auct. fid. prop. 15.

Pius IX of blessed memory, speaks in the same sense : "Sacrae missiones, ubi operariis idoneis commissae fuerint, valde utiles benedicente Domino esse constat, tum fovendae bonorum pietati, tum peccatoribus, et longo etiam vitiorum habitu depravatis hominibus, ad salutarem poenitentiam excitandis."—Enc. 8 Dec. 1849.

The action of the bishops of the entire Catholic world in

reference to parish missions has always corresponded with the sentiments pronounced by the Holy See. Our own bishops assembled in the Second Plenary Council have well understood the necessity and utility of missions, and, therefore, have laid down special regulations with regard to them. A decree of that Council says: "Si vero unquam pastorem aliquem hac in re suo officio deesse contigerit, ab episcopo cogendus erit ad missionarios accersendos; quod si non fecerit, ipse episcopus eos mittat."—Conc. Pl. II n. 473.

The work of the missions may be called the *extraordinary* ministry of the Church instituted to aid the *ordinary* ministry, to save those whom the ordinary ministry cannot reach any more, but about whom our most tender mother the Church is most solicitous. She is filled with greater anxiety about her erring children than even about the conversion of the heathen, because bad Catholics are a disgrace to her, and their sins and vices are more offensive to God than the crimes of heathen nations. "Melius enim erat illis non cognoscere viam justitiae, quam post agnitionem retrorsum converti ab eo, quod illis traditum est sancto mandato."—II Pet. 2, 27.

Priests who are called to this extraordinary ministry need to be particularly trained for it. Their entire education, or at least their last studies, are directed toward this object, we might say, exclusively, the same as it is with regard to young clerics who are preparing for the foreign missions.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO MAKE A MISSION SUCCESSFUL.

Are missions generally successful? Far from it. Most missions do a certain amount of good, some more, some less, but that does not yet make them successful missions.

What is a successful mission? It is that from which the parishioners derive a sufficient knowledge of the doctrines which they must believe as well as of the Christian duties which they must fulfil; at which all, except perhaps a few renegades, receive the Sacraments worthily, with a full determination to live as practical Catholics for the future, and keep the same for at least some years. After that another mission is needed to repair the evil that in the meanwhile

may have crept in, and to renew the spirit of zeal for good, which by that time has become languid. The success of the mission is, therefore, not to be estimated by the collections taken up during the time or at the close of the exercises, nor by the fulsome reports in the newspapers praising the grand and eloquent discourses of the missionaries, nor even by the number of converts made at the mission. For it happens but too often, that converts gained during the mission fall away from the Church as fast as they were taken in, because they are not sufficiently instructed in the faith, nor have they had opportunity to consider maturely the duties to be fulfilled by a member of the Church, before they were admitted into its fold.

To make a mission successful, three essential conditions are required from the start. If one is wanting the mission cannot but be a failure. Taking for granted that God will give extraordinary grace where human effort combines for the salvation of souls, we require: 1. Extraordinary efforts on the part of the missionaries. 2. Extra work on the part of the pastor and of his assistants. 3. Faithful co-operation on the part of the people.

A mission is a season of extraordinary grace for the parish. Everything in connection with it must be extraordinary,—the preparation, the exercises, the preachers, the discourses, the attendance of the people, the work in the confessional and all the various ceremonies performed during the mission. Then the result will not fail to be an extraordinary effect.

We need not consider in detail the part that depends on God. God most willingly gives extraordinary grace to the mission, provided fervent prayers are offered for that purpose before and during the mission, because no grace without prayer. It remains for us to consider the part the missionaries have to perform, the work the pastor has to do, and what is to be done to secure a regular attendance of the people.

THE MISSIONARIES.

To achieve some extraordinary result, God sends out extraordinary messengers who, in this case, are the missionaries.

A missionary must in every respect be a man of God. If he is this, then no special efforts on his part are needed to produce a favorable impression, wherever he is seen or whatever work he performs, in the pastor's residence, in the sacristy, in the pulpit, in the confessional, in the parlor, at the bedside of the sick. The people will at once give him their confidence, will listen to his word as directly coming from heaven, and will most eagerly look for the occasion to disclose to him the secrets of their hearts in the confessional. And the blessing of God will add still more to this good feeling that has sprung up so suddenly. Everything is ready for the missionary's work. Let him only take good care lest he spoil it by faults of his own. Let him be on his guard against impulsiveness in his sermons and instructions, in giving out his notices, in his occasional remarks, in his way of speaking in the confessional. He should be kind toward all, and manifest his love for God and his zeal for the salvation of souls at all times in spite of temptations, difficulties, obstacles and provocations. Thus he will appear among the people as a true messenger from God.

Endowed with these happy dispositions the missionaries begin their work by doing their utmost to secure a regular attendance of the people. Therefore, a good opening discourse that embodies the importance and necessity of missions together with the method of making it well, is the first in order. But, as it is most frequently the case that only a minority of the parishioners attend the late Mass on Sundays, announcements to that effect have to be made in a few well chosen words at all the Masses. This should be done by one of the missionaries, who are more experienced in this matter, so that the attention of the people will be aroused effectually. It has been said that the missionaries should not put in their appearance before the regular opening of the mission. All very good, but then the object, which is the invitation of the people to the mission, is not fully attained.

After the introduction follows the regular course of the mission,—discourses for which the missionaries are supposed to be well prepared. These discourses will have to be ar-

ranged and modified, in respect of both the subjects and their application, to the various needs of particular congregations.

The general object to be attained is the instruction of the mind and the movement of the will. Both must go hand in hand, although we may aim sometimes more directly to reach the intelligence, whilst at other times we make greater efforts to reach the heart.

II.

NECESSITY OF INSTRUCTION AT MISSIONS.

The people in general are sadly in need of religious instruction, not excepting even the so-called "educated class." The instructions first in order are those needed for the worthy reception of the sacraments during the mission, in particular of the Sacrament of Penance and of the Blessed Eucharist. These must be given from the very outset of the exercises to prevent sacrilege during the mission. As soon as the people are supposed to be sufficiently impressed with the necessity of saving their souls and the disastrous evil of mortal sin, they should be well instructed in the proper way of making a good confession. They should clearly understand the essential parts of the Sacrament of Penance and how to perform them, as also the great remedy for sacrilegious confessions in the past,—general confession,—by whom and how to be made. Nor should be omitted the main obstacles against a reconciliation with God, as enmity, the retention of ill-gotten goods, and the proximate occasion of sin. Next in order come the Blessed Eucharist, the Mass and Holy Communion. It may sound strange to say, yet it is true that many of our people do not realize what they receive in Holy Communion; as to thanksgiving after Communion, there are very few who make any. No wonder that the sacraments produce no fruit.

After this, instructions must be given in regard to all the Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church, although not necessarily in the regular order of the catechism. As far as the missionaries are concerned, they must

do all they can to infuse into the minds of the people a sufficient knowledge of their religious duties. If it is found that a good number of the parishioners are rather ignorant in regard to matters of faith, the evil must be remedied by one or the other dogmatical sermon, which should hardly ever assume the character of a controversial, and never of a polemical discourse. The missionary comes to *instruct* Catholics, *not to fight* Protestants. If any of the latter class are present, they are gained much more easily by some solid, clear and plain instruction, given in a fervent apostolic manner, than by controversy. It is perhaps advisable never to use the word "Protestant." And yet at such missions, as experience shows, many Protestants are converted, or receive the first impulse to their conversion.

But more important than all this are instructions for the *different states of life* on their special duties, which should never be omitted at any mission, even should it have to be done at the sacrifice of the ordinary evening sermon. There exists an apparent prejudice in certain quarters against these particular discourses. It cannot be denied that by the imprudent utterances on subjects in themselves of a delicate nature, harm rather than good may be done. This happens when the missionary forgets his character as an apostolic man, when he is not sufficiently prepared, when he is not careful in his expressions, when he goes into details regarding matters that should "not so much as be named among Christians," when he says the most serious things more by way of a joke than in the dignified way of a messenger from heaven, etc. Such missionaries should never be allowed to give these instructions, if they are not to be considered altogether unfit for the position of a missionary.

"But would it not be better to leave the people in their blissful ignorance?" Ignorance! Would to God it were no more than ignorance,—and if it is, then in most cases it is a culpable ignorance,—ignorance about matters which man must know to save his soul. No! Everybody is obliged to know what he is to do in his particular position or state of life. Besides, very much depends on the knowledge and the

fullfillment of these particular duties with regard to human society in general and for the Church and the State in particular. It may be laid down as the great maxim of our times: Save the family and you save the world. But to save the family or to put it on a Christian basis, it is necessary to bring the different members of the family to an exact observance of their duties; the parents, to have a higher regard for the position they hold from God, the purity of life they should cultivate, the responsibility for their offspring of which they should be mindful. Children should be taught the respect, love and obedience which they owe to their parents, how they are to shun the numerous dangers that surround them, and in what manner they should prepare for their future state of life. Everybody knows how much depends on good training of youth. One of the most recent acts of Pope Leo XIII is directed toward the elevation of the Christian family, and in this he has given the keynote to the concerted action of the hierarchy and the pastoral clergy throughout the world for social regeneration. Missionaries must take a most prominent part in this great movement of our days.

The limited space of this article does not permit a further dilucidation of the various topics to be treated in these particular instructions. For the present we leave this point to the discretion of experienced missionaries.

THE MOVEMENT AND ELEVATION OF THE WILL TO A CHANGE OF LIFE.

To effect a change of heart, to raise the soul from the mire of sin, to fill it with compunction, to detach it from earth and fill it with a desire of heaven and life everlasting—this is the very essence of a good mission. The clear and fearless exposition of the so-called Eternal Truths, the deep reflection made on them by the people, the powerful influence of God's extraordinary grace added to this, will make a lasting impression. These truths are deeply buried in the soul of every man. All believe them in some way, even infidels, no matter how much they have tried to secure themselves in

their unbelief. But, for many causes they are lost sight of. Like precious stones buried under a heap of rubbish, these eternal truths seem to be forgotten, consequently disregarded by most men, and hence arise the disorders of their lives. It is the very object of the mission to clear away the rubbish from men's souls and to show up to them these truths as they are, presenting them to the people without the cover of high-sounding sentences, or in the pomp of oratorical display. The effect is marvelous. "Videbunt et timebunt et sperabunt in Domino." Ps. xxxix, 4. After listening two or three times to the plain and forcible exposition of one or the other of these truths, the people begin to open their eyes, they "see" what they seemed not to have seen before—they fear God's judgments, the "beginning of Wisdom;"—and seeing also the goodness and mercy of God, they put their confidence in Him, begin to love Him; and after having received pardon, they are determined to serve Him faithfully in the future.

The missionaries must necessarily be well prepared for these sermons, paying more attention to sound matter, strict logical order, and persuasive, even forcible delivery, than style of language. Their eloquence will find ample occasion of displaying itself, when, after having made plain their doctrine, they begin the attack upon the will of their audience to make it surrender to the grace of God.

THE MISSIONARY IN THE CONFESSIONAL.

The first fruits of the mission are reaped in the confessional. It is there the real conversion takes place. And who should reap the fruit but the one who has sown the seed —the missionary. *All the confessions should be heard by the missionaries*, for the following reasons:

1. The missionaries have taken upon themselves the obligation of giving a good mission to the entire parish. But, the principal work of the mission is that all the parishioners make a good confession; therefore, the missionaries must take upon themselves the confessions of all the parishioners. They have no obligation to hear people from other parishes,

nor should they allow them to come, so as not to unnecessarily crowd their confessionals and thus make it more difficult for the parishioners to approach them.

2. By the very fact that by their sermons they have moved the people to repentance and have enlightened them with more religious knowledge, they have gained their confidence. The people feel attracted by them, and it is to them they desire to go to unburden their consciences. This more than ordinary confidence of the people in the missionaries is from God, and God uses it as a most effectual means for their reconciliation. Therefore, every facility ought to be offered to the people for approaching the missionaries for confession.

3. Missionaries, by their constant employment on the missions, as well as by their special instructions from home, are better adapted to deal with such complicated cases as generally turn up on the missions; they know better how to take souls steeped in vice and sacrilege, and to supply the wants of those who coming only half disposed, are still afraid to tell their sins, and most unwilling to abandon sin and the proximate occasion thereof; they understand better how to enter into the most secret recesses of the heart in which sin is kept hidden, or where the devil lurks concealed. Confessors not devoted to this special work, often lack the necessary patience, if not the requisite knowledge, to do this most arduous task in such a way as to leave no doubt of its being thoroughly accomplished.

4. The casual confessors often called to aid the missionaries frequently lack the time to enter thoroughly into the condition of the penitent at a mission. They are generally priests from other parishes, and as such have other duties to attend to; or they are unaccustomed to long and protracted sittings in the confessional, consequently they shorten the confessions as much as their conscience will allow, and often more than their conscience warrants—they do not give the penitents sufficient time to speak, silence them as overscrupulous or talkative, just when they ought to be allowed to speak; they are averse to the idea of hearing general confessions, will not allow them even in cases when they are

absolutely necessary, because in their hurry they do not perceive that necessity. What, then, is gained by such confessions?—And, consequently, of what good is the mission at all?

5. It is most important on the missions that all the confessors follow the same line of action. But, it is simply impossible to obtain this from a variety of confessors. The people discover a difference of direction very soon, and they can hardly understand it. It causes talk, criticism, dissatisfaction, etc. The missionaries are, as a rule, Religious, men of one school and consequently of one line of action. If they alone occupy the confessionals, everything works smoothly.

HOW MUST CONFESSIONS BE HEARD AT THE MISSIONS?

The duties of a confessor at a mission widely differ from those of a confessor at ordinary times. The missionary in the confessional must attend to the past, the present and the future of his penitent. With reference to the past, it must be seen whether or not a general confession is needed to bring this soul to the road of perfection. Therefore, the confessor must inquire about the past life of the penitent, although the latter may say nothing about it. Many are so ignorant that, notwithstanding the instructions given at the mission, they do not know how to approach the confessor about their past lives, others are overcome by fright, while others will allow shame to predominate over them, even at the mission, and they will say nothing about the past unless they are asked.

In regard to the present some penitents badly need instruction and there may be no other opportunity of giving it to them. To this class belong grown people who never went to Holy Communion and who could be allowed to receive it after having received a short instruction from the confessor. Married people should be questioned in regard to abuses in married life, especially when there is good reason to suspect their guilt in this matter (and where is it not?) A considerable number of married people pretend to be ignorant of the sinfulness of onanism and abortion, an evil which is

assuming greater dimensions from year to year, even in our country, according to the testimony of many eminent physicians and priests. If asked in a general way, they will often deny that they are guilty of any abuse in this line. Such people need instruction in this matter and must be made to promise to keep the law of God and nature in this regard in the future, even under the penalty of being sent away without absolution. For this we have a late decision of the Sacred Poenitentiary, which we quote.

I. Quando adest fundata suspicio, poenitentem qui de onanismo omnino silet, huic crimini esse addictum, num confessario liceat a prudenti et discreta interrogatione abstinere, eo quod praevideat plures ex bona fide exturbandos, multosque sacramenta deserturos esse?—An potius *teneatur* confessarius prudenter et discrete interrogare?

II. An Confessarius qui, sive ex spontanea confessione sive ex prudenti interrogatione, cognoscit, poenitentem esse onanistam, *teneatur* illum de hujus peccati gravitate, aeque ac de aliorum peccatorum mortalium *monere* eumque (ut ait Rituale Romanum) paterna charitate reprehendere eique absolutionem tunc solum impertiri, cum sufficientibus signis constet, eumdem dolere de praeterito et habere propositum non amplius onanistice agendi?

Sacra Poenitentiaria attento vitium infandum de quo in casu late invaluisse ad proposita dubia respondendum censuit, prout respondet:

Ad I. Regulariter *negative* ad primam partem; *affirmative* ad secundam.

Ad II. *Affirmative* juxta doctrinas probatorum auctorum.

Datum Romae in S. Poenit. die 10. Mart. 1886.

Card. MONACO, *Poenit. Maj.*

Hipp. Can. PALOMBI, *S. P. Secr.*

After that the confessor must look to and provide for the future of the penitent; and here are three things to be observed: (1) that the penitent will keep out of the proximate occasion of sin, (2) that he will fortify himself regularly with the sacraments, and (3) that he practice ejaculatory prayer in temptation.

If all the confessions are heard in this manner, then there is every reason to hope that the entire parish, being now truly reconciled to God, will persevere in God's holy service for a considerable time.

There is no need of causing the people to return to confession a second time. As a general thing, there is no time for this. All should receive absolution after their first confes-

sion, but be free to return again if their conscience is not entirely at rest. It is useless to say that they should settle their remaining scruples with their own confessors. These scruples, if they are not perhaps more than that, are often of such a nature as were the sins they concealed before, and being yet too weak, they would rather make sacrilegious confessions again, than disclose their trouble to their own confessor. Long experience proves it.

PERSEVERANCE.

Conversion and perseverance is the great two-fold object of the mission. After everything has been done for the individual parishioners in the confessional to secure their perseverance, the missionaries are to give this subject special attention in some sermons and instructions, to be preached toward the end of the mission. Among these deserve special mention the sermon on the absolute necessity of prayer, on the frequentation of the sacraments, and on shunning the proximate occasion of sin. Without these three means, salvation becomes simply impossible. But, to help carrying them into effect, the most powerful assistance of the Blessed Virgin Mary is to be obtained. For this reason, after a clear and popular discourse on the patronage of the Mother of God, the whole congregation should be dedicated to her service.

Ordinarily, this will suffice. It is well, however, to establish or promote some special means, particularly for the younger generation, to better secure their perseverance. Hence, the introduction of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, or of some other confraternity, such as that of the Holy Family, so strongly recommended by Leo XIII, should engage the attention of the missionaries. However, to render such pious institutions fruitful it becomes indispensably necessary that they be placed in charge of some priest who is both able and willing to give to them his constant care and attention; otherwise they will soon come to naught, and what was at first a very pious undertaking is turned into a ridiculous farce.

In certain localities temperance and total abstinence so-

cieties must be introduced under the same conditions. But, it is never advisable to pledge the whole congregation, because some, perhaps many will not keep it, and not having kept it, they may stay from the sacraments. The zeal of missionaries who exact this pledge is certainly very praiseworthy, but may it not be asked: What right have the missionaries to demand from the people of an entire parish that to which no law, either divine or human, obliges them? There are other and more effectual means to check the demon of intemperance, instituted by the Lord Himself.

DUTIES OF PASTORS AND THEIR ASSISTANTS IN REGARD TO THE MISSION.

To give the work of the missionaries more effect, the pastor and his assistants should co-operate with them wherever they can, and perform well especially that part of the mission which directly devolves on them. Much, very much is to be done by the parish clergy before, during and after the mission.

1. *Before the mission.* About a month before the mission the people are to receive due notice of it. The mission must be emphatically announced three or four Sundays before it begins, and the good will of the people ought to be aroused in advance in expectation of the extraordinary season of grace prepared for them. A sermon or two, together with the morning exhortations given at the early Masses on Sundays, on the goodness of God soon to be manifested toward the parish, as well as on the abuse of God's grace, especially at the mission, will not fail to prepare the people well. It is a very good practice to have printed notices distributed throughout the parish, stating the day and hour of the opening of the mission, the hours of the daily exercises, and the time for the men and women accordingly as it is arranged. A word of encouragement, together with an appropriate text from Holy Scripture, should find a prominent place on this paper. It may also be published in general by what class of missionaries the exercises are to be conducted; but *no names of individuals* should be given, because the

very name of the missionary, his nationality, perhaps some personal prejudice against him, against the Order of which he is a member, may keep some from attending the mission. For the same reason it is inadvisable to publish in advance the subjects of the discourses, or who is to preach on such or such a day. Such things do more harm than good. The devil hates missions—and when he cannot prevent them, he does all he can to keep the people away; and if a pin's head will serve his purpose he will make use of it. *By no means should the time be published, how long the mission will last*, because some who need the mission most, particularly the sermons of the first few days, will take this for an excuse and begin to come only toward the end. "Experto crede."

Besides this, the pastor and his assistants should organize among themselves a general visitation through the parish, find out the most careless members, and give them a cordial invitation to attend the mission. Such visits, made at such a time, produce an immense deal of good. The sight of the pastor, looking after his wayward sheep, a few kind words from him, an affectionate shaking of hands, do not fail to favorably impress the most hardened hearts.

Another most important preparation for the mission consists in arranging for a sufficient number of missionaries to do the immense work required, and for sufficient time to do it well. We have seen what work is to be effected in the pulpit and in the confessional. *The pastor should inform the superior of the mission-house as approximately as he can do it, how many families belong to his parish, or what the number of communicants may be, and then leave him to determine the number of missionaries and the time the mission is to last.* Superiors generally know how many men they must send and how many days they must work, to make the mission a real success. If they find opposition in this point on the part of the pastors, they cannot guarantee a fruitful mission. We shall give an answer below to the objections made against missions on this head.

2. *During the mission.* After the pastor has thus prepared his people for the mission, he, on the opening day in-

troduces to them the missionaries as so many messengers from God, and he hands over to them, for the few days to come, the entire care and management of his parish. In making this introduction he follows the customs of the missionaries on such occasions. Then he retires, so to speak, from his place on the stage, only to work so much the more behind the scenes. He acts like the captain of a vessel, who leaves the whole management of the ship to the pilot, until the latter has steered it through the harbor in safety.

The pastor should particularly abstain from interfering with the missionaries in regard to the management of the mission. The missionaries have a continuous experience in this work; they have their time-honored traditions and customs, their rules, their special education in this branch of the sacred ministry, and a special grace from Heaven besides. They know what sermons and instructions are needed, what is to be said, when, how, and how much; what ceremonies are to be performed etc. All that the pastor should do is to inform the missionaries of the peculiar vices, abuses, dangers, etc., prevalent in the parish, then leave it to them to employ whatever remedies they see best adapted for the cure of the evil.

The assistants of the pastor should not go on vacation during the mission, but help wherever they can to promote the success of the mission. They, as well as the pastor himself, are to inquire whether the wayward sinners whom they met before the mission, are attending the exercises, and, if not, visit them again to remind them of their promise.

They should be willing to take from the hands of the missionaries the instruction of certain grown-up people, that need some special attention, such as have not yet made their First Communion, or have grown up in total ignorance of their religion: they are to take charge of converts who wish to join the Church, or at least desire to know more about the Catholic Church with a view of adopting the faith if they can be convinced of its divine origin. The parish clergy should take upon themselves the late Mass on Sundays as well as on week-days, give Benediction, and distribute Holy

Communion whenever it is necessary. In doing so they save a great deal of time for the missionaries, which these badly need for the confessional.

3. *After the mission.* If the powers of darkness could not prevent the mission, nor the people from attending it, they shall surely use every artifice to destroy the effects of it. But the vigilance and the solicitude of the parish clergy may prevent this, at least to a great extent, if not altogether. For this purpose the pastor should give his attention to the following points:

At least one sermon should be preached on the efforts the powers of hell will make to gain back what they have lost during the mission. Our Lord Himself speaks of this—Luke c. xi. In this connection the means to be adopted should be explained. It is well to warn against a relapse, but the relapsed must not be discouraged. The temptation to give up all attempt toward a pure life after the first relapse, is most common. And many of those converted at the mission will fall again, especially if they had contracted sinful habits in which they had indulged for years. The mission has changed their will but not their nature. "The spirit is indeed willing but the flesh is weak."—Matt. xxvi.

The people should be exhorted and encouraged to frequent the sacraments at least every three months, young people oftener; and *every facility should be offered to the men for approaching the confessionals at a time when they are free from their work.* Without the sacraments the souls of the people will die from spiritual starvation, the same as their bodies would die if left without food for a considerable time. This is the most important point to be attended to after the mission. Another general visitation should be made through the parish, at least within a year, to see whether all comply with this duty.

Our men, both married and single, need some special care. An idea is suggested here which has never yet been carried out in practice, and which would nevertheless greatly promote perseverance after the mission among the men of the parish. Once every three months the married men ought to

be called together—and very soon after, the unmarried men—to give them what might be styled a "Quarterly Conference," consisting of a well prepared and a well digested familiar discourse on some of their particular duties with special reference to the exigencies of the present day. This occasion could be made use of to exhort them to approach the sacraments again on the Sunday following, having for this purpose a sort of two General Communions, one for the married, another for the single men ; but not together, because the young do not as a rule like to be merged in a crowd of older men.

If some confraternity or religious society was established or newly organized at the mission, let that be well attended to, especially with regard to the frequentation of the sacraments. Still, this must not be considered as carrying out the object mentioned in the foregoing point, because it affects only a certain portion of the congregation, that is, those who belong to some pious union.

As it is the practice of most missionaries to have a "Renewal of the Mission," let the pastor order it by all means and make his arrangements for it very soon after the mission. The Renewal confirms the good effects of the mission and makes them lasting—it prevents the relapse of many into their former evil habits—it raises again and encourages those that have relapsed already—and it brings in those that have neglected the mission. But, if the *Renewal* as such, is to do any good, it should be given *at a time when the mission is yet fresh in the minds of the people*, and, therefore, should take place at least within nine months after the mission. If later, it is no more a Renewal, nor can it be treated as such, but it is to be a new mission, and that would come too soon. Missions given too frequently, generally do more harm than good.

OBJECTIONS AGAINST MISSIONS.

In conclusion let us review some of the ordinary objections made against missions. Some of these are expressed openly, while others are kept concealed in the minds of the pastors ;

but they are well known even without having recourse to the art of "mind reading."

"In my parish everything is in the best order."—You deserve praise, my dear pastor, for the high opinion you have of your people, and, no doubt, you have worked well for them, but you see only the surface of the hearts of your people without knowing or even suspecting what is concealed underneath.

"But my people have great confidence in me."—True; and just because many of them not wishing to destroy that good opinion they know you have of them, will not tell you all that burdens their souls.

"I ask all that is needed of my penitents."—Did you "dig in the wall"—"pass in through the inner door"—of their consciences?—If you did, you might have beheld "every form of creeping things and of living creatures" (Ez. viii.) But these "walls and inner doors" have generally to be burst open first by the extraordinary grace of the mission and by the vivid reflection on the Eternal Truths, before any one can look through.

"Missions lessen the authority of the pastor. The missionaries gain the entire confidence of the people—the pastor is nothing."—Not so. The people generally feel very grateful toward the pastor for procuring the mission for them. That the people show an extraordinary confidence in the missionaries, is essentially necessary for the good success of the mission. God wants it so. Or, does the pastor perhaps, wish the people to have no or but little confidence in the men whom he has called to his aid?

"Is it not an indirect acknowledgment of the pastor that he has not performed his duty toward his people or that he is unable to do so?"—On the contrary, he shows that he does his duty by calling the mission to his parish, and if he would not, his bishop would have a right to call him to order for neglecting his duty. The best and most zealous pastors are the first to call for the mission.

"Missions do no good. I have had a mission; it effected no change for the better. I have heard the same of other

missions."—A vast amount of good effected by the mission is never seen until judgment day. But, supposing this to be so, then, let it be asked: were those missions such as are described in this article? And, if they were not, whose fault was it? Was there sufficient time given to the missionaries to preach what was necessary—to hear the confessions as they should have been heard? Or, was the whole work rather to be finished within a very limited time? A good mission in a good sized parish should last ten days, and if the sexes are separated, ten days should be allowed for each sex. Are not pastors generally opposed to the idea of having a mission take more than a week's time? And then they want no more than two or three missionaries for a work that requires four and five. To whom is the failure of such missions to be attributed?—Did the pastor sufficiently prepare his people for the mission? Did he try to perpetuate the good effects of the mission by doing his duty after it? Let these questions be fairly answered, then we may be able to account for the partial or total failure of some missions.

"Missions are too expensive." This may be so, but they are expensive neither to the church nor to the pastor. The collections taken up during the mission, and especially at the end, together with what accrues from the sale of the articles of devotion, more than cover the expenses incurred by the pastor and of the donation given to the missionaries. And these are all the expenses which need and should be made. There is no necessity for grand dinners, costly wines, and other extravagant delicacies during the mission. The writer of this article has taken a part in five hundred and forty-seven missions, and among these he does not remember *a single one* the income of which did not more than cover the ordinary expenses without any particular effort being made to raise money for this purpose. It may happen indeed that some pastors can not raise a certain sum of money from the mission, which they expected for some otheir pious purposes not connected with the mission. But, missions are not given for such an object.

Let this suffice for the furtherance of the great work car-

ried on in the Church of God by her extraordinary ministry—the missions. Thanks to the great mercy of God, many missions are given throughout the width and the length of the country, and many more should be given, and many more missionaries are needed for this salutary work. But, a great many of our missions are not yet what they ought to be, and consequently do not effect the amount of good intended by the Church. The object of this article is to draw the attention of both pastors and missionaries to some of the defects of our missions which could easily be remedied. May this be done for the greater glory of God and the salvation of so many more souls.

JOSEPH WISSEL, C.SS.R.

Mission House of the Redemptorist Fathers, Saratoga, N. Y.

EFFECTIVE MISSION WORK IN OUR PARISHES.

BY A PASSIONIST FATHER.

I.

WITH a rapidly increasing population and a corresponding increase of clergy, both regular and secular, the holding of missions in parishes has become a very noted element in the moral and religious world, and deserves more than a mere passing notice. Already the demand upon missionary priests is far greater than the supply, owing, no doubt, to the remarkable influence which these missions have upon the bulk of our people. No one who has listened to the hurried step or dull patter of a thousand feet or more hastening toward the dimly lighted church—long before the dawn of day, or watched the surging crowd that issues forth at night, and the constant stream going and coming from the same holy place all day long, can fail to recognize the wonderful influence which a mission has upon the people. The determined countenance, the humble attitude and heroic patience of the many gathered at all times around the confessional during these days of graces, and the piety of those

who throng the Communion table, all testify to the immediate benefits that a mission brings to a parish. In fact, to gain an adequate idea of the influence and benefits of missions, would be to speak the history of real Christian civilization viewed in its highest form and under the most favorable auspices.

The men whose special vocation has destined them to labors of this kind and who are called "Missionary Fathers," can lay no greater claim to power as priests than that of God's regularly appointed ministers—such as the parochial clergy. Yet in point of fact they do possess a power greater in *word* and in *work*, and this seems to be the combined result of given conditions on the part of the people requiring a mission and of certain qualifications on the part of the missionary priests, which, humanly speaking, insure the success of their work.

Generally speaking, the conditions which call for a mission are found in all parishes. The *ordinary condition* is the positive need of a periodical "renewal of spirit" among the people. The most zealous pastor will find it a difficult task to preserve among his parishioners that practical religion which he wishes to see in them. Human nature is weak—it is prone to evil. Habits of carelessness and downright indifference are easily contracted, and moral evils become prevalent. There is a strong tendency to slide away from God and the practice of religious duties and to shirk every moral obligation. A renewal of religious energy, therefore, becomes a necessity. A prudent pastor finds that the most strenuous efforts of the local clergy are not sufficient to effect this renewal. He must resort to some extraordinary means. Hence the mission—which, if conducted at a seasonable time and in the proper manner, cannot fail to produce that renewal of spirit in the congregation which is the immediate object of the mission.

There is another condition calling for missions that may be classified under the head of *ordinary*, and that is the change that takes place in a congregation every three or more years. Our parishes in most instances are composed

of a large floating population. There is a continual going out of people and a corresponding influx. Then again there is that constant change which in the lapse of time nature herself effects. In a very few years the child has reached the period of youth, the girl has attained womanhood, the boy becomes the man. This changes almost the entire complexion of a congregation at least every five years, and therefore a mission, if not of absolute necessity, is an affair of the utmost importance in such a parish and should be held at least every five years.

Some of the conditions, however, which call for a mission are quite *exceptional.* The formation of a parish, or the re-construction of a parish where the the church has been rebuilt or enlarged, come under this category. Also when some dreadful scandal has occurred in a parish which is calculated to weaken faith and promote immorality. In the latter case there is no doubt but that a mission is very necessary. The novelty of the mission, the powerful sermons of the Fathers and their advice to individuals in the confessional, will do more, humanly speaking, than anything else to destroy the scandal and heal its ill effects. In the former case nothing, perhaps, conduces more to the formation of a parish or its reconstruction than a good mission. The people flocking day and night to the exercises become habituated to church attendance. The pastor, who is supposed to be present at nearly every exercise, will come into immediate contact with his people as a congregation and with individuals who heretofore were unknown to him as Catholics, but through the mission are brought to a sense of duty toward God and the Church.

The time of Jubilee might be added as another exceptional cause calling for a mission. As during this season extraordinary graces and indulgences are offered the people, it is well that the parochial clergy afford them extraordinary facilities for acquiring these special blessings.

These ordinary or exceptional conditions being found in a parish, a judicious selection of the time for holding the mission has much to do with its success. A pastor should

endeavor to have his mission at that season of the year which affords the best opportunity to his people for coming in a body to all the exercises. Many priests invariably want their missions in Lent. We fail to see why ; because outside of our large cities it is a very inconvenient time as far as the people are concerned, and then the weather at this season is generally very bad. It might be remarked, also, that missions held every year in a parish are unseasonable for another reason. People become accustomed to them, and the mission loses that power which its very novelty carries with it. When the needs of a parish are such that extra preachers and confessors must be called annually, it is far better to term their labors "*a Retreat*," and let the exercises be conducted under that form so that the mission, when it comes, may appear to the people what it really is—"an extraordinary season of grace and salvation."

II.

The real success of a mission depends principally on the labors of the missionary Fathers, their personal qualifications and the character or style of sermons and instructions they give to the people.

The groundwork of their labors may be considered under a twofold aspect—objectively, or subjectively. *Objectively*, it is the mind and the heart of the people—their moral condition. *Subjectively*, it is the quick perception of this by the missionary Fathers, and the judicious application of that style of sermons and instructions best suited to the people's needs. Hence the effective missionary priest is not the mere declaimer who has learned his lesson as a schoolboy and gets it off with more or less dramatic effect. Neither is he the man who rattles off a stereotyped edition of powerful sermons without any special relation to the wants of his immediate audience. Nor again is he an effective missionary who fires off his biggest guns at the very commencement of the mission, without any relation to the logical sequence of eternal truths or the moral condition of his audience. Such may please for the time, but their work is not lasting. The real

powerful missionary, the man whose labors are destined to be crowned with success, is he who quickly takes in the mental and moral worth of his listeners and shapes his different subjects and the style of his preaching in accordance with this idea. Viewed under its every aspect, a mission should be above all things else a most logical affair. Logical in the conception of the end for which the mission is given, logical in the application of those means best suited to attain that end, and logical, above all, in the sequence of truths, whether moral or dogmatic, that are placed before the minds of the people for their consideration. As a rule, there should be at least two priests conducting a work of this kind that aspires to the dignity and success of a mission. These two men should form, as it were, a powerful battery, each well prepared in his own distinct mode of warfare—each attacking the enemy from a different position, and in an altogether different manner, yet both working in the most logical harmony. One is pre-eminently the instructor or *Catechist*, the other is the *Preacher*.

The style of the catechist should be didactic—plain, simple, and every word right to the point. He explains the laws of God and the precepts of the Church; he prepares the people for a good confession by explaining its qualities. His object is to enlighten the mind—he never seeks to move the will. His instructions should be short. The preacher, however, on whom practically the success of the mission depends, must seek to move the will. He hammers while the iron is heated and shapes or moulds the hearts of the people. Having measured the mental and moral calibre of his audience he suits his subjects accordingly. Generally his sermons are on the eternal truths, such as "The Importance of Salvation—Mortal Sin—Death, etc." He will, however, introduce into these, very adroitly but powerfully, the vices he has come to root up, the evils he has come to cure. Moreover, when he is aware that there is some local or prevalent evil existing, he will concentrate on this all his powers of eloquence in some special sermon about the middle of the mission. The preacher should be a

man of great experience, with a correct knowledge of the human heart, and a keen observer of its many passions. His discourses must be carefully prepared, and consist of solid, well digested matter; every argument so logically put together that the whole tremendous force of his entire sermon may come upon the heart like an avalanche, moving the will to do the good he seeks, or avoid the evil he deplores.

Men thus qualified will not only renew the spirit of an entire congregation, and lay down the solid foundation for a grand spiritual edifice, but they actually reap a rich harvest during the very time of the mission. This is evident in the number and kind of confessions they hear. It is the surest test of the success of a mission. As a rule missionary priests devote from ten to twelve hours daily to the hearing of confessions. Generally, more time is given to each penitent during a mission than on other occasions. The reason is obvious. The practice of requiring general confessions during a mission is not at all commendable. Such confessions can hardly be made in a satisfactory manner unless the penitent return a second and perhaps a third time. Now all this, except in cases of real necessity, is little better than loss of valuable time to the confessor. Moreover, experience teaches that this promiscuous hearing of general confessions during the mission, is calculated to upset weak minds, and leave the conscience in a very troubled state afterwards. In some instances, also, it panders to the foolish idea that the holy Fathers are, after all, the only men who can hear confessions properly, and when these shall have left the place, the penitent, having lost confidence in the local clergy, is simply at sea and liable at any time to suffer shipwreck. Now, one of the characteristic features of efficient missionaries is that they establish or strengthen the confidence of people in the local clergy, and whatever may be done to the contrary is positively detrimental to the ultimate success of the mission. There are, however, cases in time of the mission, and many of them, where the confessor is obliged to permit and insist on a general confession, other cases again where he must patiently listen and solve the doubts engen-

dered by the instructions or sermons of the mission. In a word, the missionary Fathers cannot hurry people, or as some one remarked "railroad them through the confessional." This would be unwise, for it is here especially that the Fathers do their solid work. The criterion of their success here is not the number they rush through, as mere absolving machines, but the completeness of the work they do in each case, the finish that is given to every individual that kneels before them. Hence though *one* confession is sufficient during the mission, it is always more satisfactory to penitent and confessor, when a second conveniently can be made, because this enables the confessor to give the finest touches to his work, and leaves the conscience of the penitent perfectly at rest.

Although the work of uprooting local and public evils is done principally by powerful sermons, yet where there is an understanding and concerted action among the confessors, that work is best accomplished in the confessional.

With regard to the establishment of confraternities or sodalities, that is best effected toward the end of the mission. If the mission lasts two weeks, it is well to begin this work of establishment at the end of the first week. Announce for Sunday afternoon a meeting of men or women as the case may be, and when they are gathered, a simple explanation of the nature of the society to be established and strong reasons for joining it, may be given, and then the names of members taken. Another meeting the last Sunday of the mission will confirm the work, and generally bring new members. These confraternities or sodalities are very necessary in every parish, and they should be established or strengthened during the mission.

As to people who are not of the Church Catholic, but come occasionally to the exercises of the mission, the less particular attention publicly paid to them by missionary priests, the better. Missions given in parishes are not as a rule for outsiders. The converts that a parish priest earnestly seeks are his own fallen people. The number of *these* converts,—not the converts from Protestantism—tells the real success of

a mission. It must, however, be granted that missions are the source of innumerable conversions to Catholicity; yet this happens, not through the preaching of controversy, but rather by the clear and forcible explanation of plain, moral and dogmatic truths, without any reference whatever to non-Catholics. There is a loftiness and conviction in these grand truths which seizes the mind and the heart of non-Catholics, and converts thus made are generally faithful and a credit to the Church. It is laudable, indeed, to set aside some definite hour in the day, when non-Catholics, seeking information, may call at the parochial residence and receive that attention which their condition deserves. But barring some exceptional cases, it is better, after a short encouraging conversation with them, to refer or introduce them to the local clergy, and let these devote that length of time to their instruction and probation which a zealous missionary cannot spare, and which, moreover, is necessary for the permanent success of such conversions.

III.

Although a mission may be held under favorable circumstances already mentioned, and conducted by very efficient men, yet the co-operation of the local clergy is an important factor in its success.

Preparatory to the mission, and for two or three Sundays before its opening, a clear announcement should be made in such a manner as to elicit all-sided attention. Its necessity and object should be dwelt upon at some length. And here the pastor has a magnificent opportunity of engaging his zeal in behalf of his flock. He can remind them of the many efforts and sacrifices made by him in their behalf; that with all this, he finds many have fallen away, others have grown cold and indifferent. His dread responsibility before God for every soul committed to his care may be dwelt upon with splendid effect. And now to relieve his own conscience, that nothing has been left undone for his people, and seeking above all things else their spiritual

welfare, he invites missionary priests, as "God's special messengers"—to come and labor for them. He will have special prayers recited every day after the parochial Mass and request special prayers at home, for the success of the mission. This proceeding not only announces the mission and makes its advent the topic of conversation, but draws God's special blessing on the work. Immediately preceding the mission, it should be well announced in the daily or weekly local newspapers. It is well to have the "order of exercises" furnished by the missionary Fathers a week before the the mission opens,—and let this be printed and distributed at the church door, on the Sunday that the mission begins. Some priests find it an excellent plan to make a visitation of the entire parish as soon as they have definitely arranged the time of the mission, and thus personally announce it and encourage those to come whom they know actually need it.

During the mission, the local clergy co-operate very much by their presence at the different exercises. The people like to see their own priests interested in the work. Their example is encouraging. Moreover, the clergy have thus an opportunity of noticing those present and finding out the absent. They will make it a point to visit the negligent and thus bring them to the mission.

Excepting the simple announcement of a collection to defray the expenses of the mission, the mention of money matters should be studiously avoided during this holy time. If the people have reason to suspect that the mission is a money-making affair, they become prejudiced at once and the mission is a failure. It matters not how eloquent the missionary Fathers may be, however great their powers of attraction, let people conceive the idea that emptying their purses is the object of the mission, and the indifferent will remain away while the good become disgusted. No one will object to the customary plate offering that is taken up at the principal services. But if people are forced to pay admission to the services whether they are pew-holders or not, if the collectors are at the door with their baskets to shame them into an admission fee, the result is discouraging. The poor cannot come, the hard

cases will use this as a pretext for not coming, the clergy are severely criticized, the missionaries lose courage,—their principal work then must be the defense of the clergy and trying to explain away their conduct. Reminding the people daily that the Holy Sacrifice is offered up for those that contribute ten cents or more to the offering, morning and evening, savors of traffic; so also the ten cent basket, which is so unbecomingly thrust at people as they enter, ill becomes the mission; and the enormous prices set on mission goods, or pious articles, for sale during this time, is in many cases little short of downright swindling. Men of vast experience both as missionaries and pastors know well that when a mission is spiritually a perfect success, the financial condition of the parish will quickly become better. Let your people make the mission well, do not place even the shadow of a hindrance to this, and once they begin to come regularly to church, join societies, and frequent the Sacraments, their purse-strings will open generously. Of all the impediments to the success of a mission, this appearance of money-making is the greatest; whereas, when the congregation is imbued with the idea that the mission is purely for their spiritual good, that the pastor looks to this above all things else, then "all co-operating in good," the mission is a grand success.

IV.

To preserve the good spirit engendered by the mission, and gather the fruit it is calculated to bring forth, the labors of the missionary Fathers should be followed up by some systematic work on the part of the local clergy. The following suggestions may be of some help in enabling zealous priests to carry out this idea.

1.—*System in Preaching.*—People grow tired of the ordinary Sunday sermon. It's the same identical explanation of the Gospel year after year. They need more plain, practical instruction and fewer moral harangues. These instructions should be made interesting, which will always be the case when they are given in something like systematic order and

are replete with simple but solid information. Such would be a series of instructions on the Sacraments, the Commandments, the ceremonies of the Mass, as we find them treated in that admirable work of the Abbé Gaume—"The Catechism of Perseverance." Occasionally a series of dogmatic instructions on faith, on the Church, on the religious errors of the day. It is remarkable with what avidity people seek after information of this kind, and it is easily given by a zealous priest.

2.—*System in Hearing Confessions.*—Every possible facility should be afforded the people for approaching frequently the tribunal of penance. A prudent disposition of the priests' time for this work is the confessional, and great punctuality should be noticeable. It is not at all encouraging when a priest announces confessions at three o'clock, and does not appear until four or five. Many sacrifices are made by people in coming, but habitual disappointments when they do come, may keep them away altogether. The practice of those priests who hear confessions every day, or every second day, before or after their Mass, is commendable. It is an immense relief to them on Saturdays, and moreover it gives a better opportunity to many working people, men especially, to be heard on Saturday night. Parochial clergy should insist on this, that girls not working and married women, especially the old women, should go to confession during the day-time, so that when the working class, men particularly, come on Saturday nights, they may not wait too long or be crowded out altogether.

3.—*System with Sodalities.*—There is no doubt but that the sodalities or societies in a parish are its mainstay. Special attention must be paid to these. It is not enough to leave them to the tender care of the good Sisters, much less to care for themselves. They need the personal attention of a priest. Besides the few prayers recited at their regular monthly meetings, it is advantageous to give them a short instruction and some encouragement. This can easily be

done by the priest appointed to their charge. Moreover, his presence regularly at their meetings, gives him a chance to see who are present, and find out who are absent. A priest should never absent himself from the meeting of men's societies.

When sodalities prosper and the members show a good will, it is amazing how advantageous a short retreat is to them, and to the priest. The Retreat may be for only a few days, or for a week, but it gives them to understand the zeal of their pastor, and while strengthening the sodality in spirit, it generally augments its number.

In conclusion it may be remarked that it is comparatively easy for a priest to build upon the groundwork laid during a mission, if in his priestly contact with his people, he manifests a true apostolic zeal for their spiritual welfare. In this manner, he will hold his own with any missionary Father. His congregation will love him and confide in him. Nothing captivates our people, rich and poor, learned or unlearned, more than the unselfish spirit and disinterested zeal of the priest. They gladly come to his aid in financial difficulties. They look to him as their spiritual Father. They heed his pastoral advice. They loathe to displease him; and although some may fall away from the fervor of piety engendered by the mission, yet many will remain to testify by their exemplary lives its manifold benefits.

FATHER ROBERT, C. P.

St. Michael's Passionist Monastery,
West Hoboken, N. J.

THE WORK OF PARISH MISSIONS.

BY A FATHER OF THE SOCIETY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

MISSIONS are of no recent date in the Church of Christ. This world-wide Institution is, in fact, the outcome of a Divine Mission. Being "sent" by His Eternal Father into this home of sin, our Redeemer entered upon His missionary career, "teaching daily in the temple," "preaching to the multitudes from the ship," and as He "went about doing good," He at the same time carefully trained His disciples for a similar work among Jews and Gentiles. "Sicut misit me Pater," etc. The mission, then, in the Catholic Church, is a continuation of the life-work of Jesus, whether by it are meant prolonged missionary labors among barbarous tribes, or the exercise of regular parochial missions at home. It is of the latter only that I wish to speak.

The benefits that accrue from this work in Christ's vineyard cannot easily be overestimated. During these seasons of extraordinary grace the kingdom of God is re-established in the hearts of many. Sinners are restored to God's friendship; tepid souls are re-animated to a life of fervor; the righteous encouraged in their efforts to aim at still greater perfection; in a word: A mission well made, destroys the kingdom of satan, purifies and renovates the parish, and glorifies the Church of God. What Retreats are for the clergy and religious, missions are for the laity. They are the Spiritual Exercises of which all stand in need at times according to St. Paul, Eph. iv, 23, "Renovamini" etc. A series of eternal truths, and instructions on the duties of the various states of life, proposed for consideration within the space of eight, ten or fourteen days, is calculated to quicken man's perception of things supernatural, move the will and mould his conduct more effectually than if given out on successive Sundays or after still longer intervals when the bustle and distraction of every day life have almost wiped out every vestige of the preceding instruction. Add to this, that the sermons are preached by strangers, who, in wielding the two-edged sword, are listened to by many with

greater docility than is one familiar to all. The mission is a time of special graces on account of the many and fervent prayers that are offered up daily by hundreds crying out for help. Seldom are confessions made so complete, so sincere, and so contrite as during the time of a mission. For proofs I refer to the writings of St. Alphonse of Liguori, who gave missions for forty years, and to what is related in the biographies of other great missionaries, *e. g.* St. Francis Xavier, St. Vincent a Paulo, St. Philip Neri, St. Leonard a Portu Mauritio and St. Paul of the Cross. What wonder, then, that Roman Pontiffs have so often recommended and highly indulgenced such exercises, and approved of the religious communities established for the purpose of giving missions! Must even a D'Alembert confess to the impious Voltaire: "This jubilee has put us back half a century; another such jubilee, and our cause is ruined." If missions were deemed a necessity in ages of faith and countries entirely Catholic, who can doubt their usefulness in this age of religious indifference in a country that exhibits a far greater variety of creeds than nationalities? A country in which a most dangerous influence is brought to bear on weak Catholics by a sectarian, irreligious and immoral press; where secret societies are springing up almost every day, and snares are so cunningly laid by the craft of those "that lie in wait;" where so many inducements are offered to our pleasure-loving youths and maidens; where many are to be reclaimed who have received a very imperfect Catholic education at home or in school; while others, still lingering outside of the fold, are only waiting for some powerful impulse to examine the claims of God's holy Church.

Besides these general conditions which call for missions, there are others of exceptional nature, *v. g.*, sinful customs and abuses of long standing, scandals, enmities, violent prejudices against Catholics or invincible ignorance of our holy religion.

In order to meet these wants of man's heart and heal the infirmities of his soul, the mission appeals alike to his intellect and heart. The discourses on the end of man and the

eternal truths are so many knocks at the door of his heart and set him thinking, while the plain instructions on the Commandments and Sacraments (Penance, Eucharist—as Communion and Sacrifice, and Matrimony) point out to him the *way* and *means* of salvation. Conferences in which the duties of the various states of life are explained on confession day, are a great help in examining the conscience and disposing for heartfelt contrition. They enable penitents to make a complete confession at once and thus quiet their conscience. It is well, however, to give those who desire it, another chance to receive the Sacrament of Penance while preparing for the Communion to be offered up on the day after the mission for deceased relatives, friends, benefactors and pioneers of the parish. What an acceptable time for a good general confession given to all for whom the same is necessary or useful! And their number is legion. Many have not yet made one. Though their former confessions may not have been sacrilegious, yet these people are not altogether at ease on account of defects that may have crept in, in course of time, in the examination of conscience, contrition, accusation, performance of penance—all or some of which were gone through in a hurried, thoughtless, superficial manner. Habitual sinners there are who show great surprise when told that if they wish to receive absolution, they must make a number of confessions over again. They assure the confessor that they always confessed their sins according to numerical and specific distinctions and aggravating circumstances, imagining that this is all that is required of them. Not a few, who, through fear or shame, had concealed their greatest sins for years, are anxiously looking forward to the mission to rid themselves of the heavy load with the help of God's grace and the assistance of the missionary Father. Scrupulous penitents must, of course, abide by the directions received from their ordinary confessor. As a rule, confessions are not heard during the first days of the Mission, until people have attended some of the instructions and have had ample time to prepare for a review. Married women are usually invited to conference

and confession first of all. Once you gain the good will of the wives and mothers you have secured the valuable assistance of what might be called very energetic "canvassing agents" in every home of the parish.

Again, rare opportunities are offered in these conferences, as well as in occasional sermons, to inveigh against (public) local evils and perseveringly to combat them on all sides until uprooted, which is part of the groundwork to be done during the mission. The service thus rendered to pastors by discreet and systematic work in the pulpit and confessional is seldom ineffectual and transient.

However, it is not only by preaching and hearing confessions that missions are to become a success with God's help, but also by the establishment of confraternities, sodalities, etc. With the blessed Rosary, Scapular and Indulgenced Cross, the Christian's armor, our child of the mission is prepared for renewed attacks on the part of Satan, the world and the flesh. There is an Altar Society, that of Christian Mothers, a Young Ladies's Sodality, that comes forth from the exercises on a general Communion day with re-awakened energies and numbers greatly increased; here youths and married men are prompted to join a Catholic Mutual Aid Association or a Sodality Club deemed expedient *pro hic et nunc*. How many of our young men are lost to the Church by the inducement the Lodge holds out to them! They are told that in time of sickness they can draw dividends—three to five dollars a week; every possible encouragement and assistance offered them in business, and when they travel abroad they meet friends and supporters in every town. Religion, they are given to understand, is no barrier to the privileges of membership. How important, then, the introduction of some of our well organized Catholic societies that supply all the reasonable demands of the age!

During missions non-Catholics evince at times a strong desire to come nearer to our Church, and here another field of labor opens for pastor and missionary. While the greatest possible attention should be given to such as seek earnestly, it might be the wiser plan not to precipitate their conversion,

but kindly invite, nay urge them to continue their studies and prayers and be prompt at catechetical instructions, even after they have attended all the mission exercises. Poorly instructed converts are apt to fall away after the first fervor of enthusiasm has abated, or they cling to the Church like the icicles hanging from the eaves. A mission can at most give the impulse and lay the foundation whereon to erect the religious edifice, except in cases where candidates for Baptism or Eucharist have previously acquired a satisfactory knowledge of the Catholic religion. In this case there need be no delay, especially if friends or relatives begin to throw obstacles in the way of conversion. If, for good reasons, the admission of converts into the Church during a mission, be considered advisable, religious instruction should be continued for some time at least after the mission. One of the most necessary precautions to be taken when converts are received "on short acquaintance," is, undoubtedly, to secure a good sponsor, a well instructed, practical Catholic, who will interest himself in the spiritual advancement of his god-child. It is not out of place either to assure converts, desirous of avoiding publicity for good reasons, that the abjuration of previous errors, and profession of faith, etc., need not be made before the entire congregation, a few witnesses being sufficient. Not a few, on the contrary, may easily be induced to have the act performed solemnly to the edification of the faithful.

The main object of missions, however, is to strengthen faith in our Catholic people, and reanimate their religious fervor; their exemplary lives will then help to spread God's kingdom among others, as was the case in the earlier ages of Christianity.

The co-operation of the parochial clergy is necessary preparatory to the mission by announcing the same in good season, say two or three weeks before the opening. In places, however, where considerable opposition may be looked for on the part of bad Catholics, freethinkers or others, it may be best to give shorter notice and thus prevent schemers from decrying the mission and prepossessing the minds of

men against it. While counseling merchants, traveling men, and the faithful generally, not to enter upon journeys that might be postponed, and undertake no work, engage in no trade, traffic, plays or amusements incompatible with this time of prayer and meditation, the parish priest will do a good service to his people and missionary by briefly explaining the end of the mission and calling upon his flock to pray for abundant graces. A short devotion with all in church on Sundays for that purpose and Rosary offered up by the children during morning Mass on week days, must assuredly help to dispose people for these days of salvation. Is it not a great source of consolation for a missionary to know that while he is seeking "the lost one" with untiring zeal, good and pious souls, in the seclusion of a convent home perhaps, are pouring forth fervent prayers during the silent vigils of the night before the tabernacle for himself and his dear children of the mission? "Neque qui plantat est aliquid, neque qui vigilat, sed qui incrementum dat, Deus."—I Cor. iii, 7. I consider this one of the most important features of mission work.

It is not always lost time, either, to visit careless Catholics, even such as have not gone to church for years, and kindly invite them to the mission. At times this cordial invitation accompanied with a fatherly admonition may be made by letter. A kind and encouraging word to such as keep boarding-houses, restaurants, meat markets, as well as other public men, *v. g.*, physicians, instructors, state or city officials, may not only prove highly beneficial to these parties personally, but to all upon whom such men are able to wield an influence for good or evil. It is well to prepare a list of nominal Catholics, for whom hopes may yet be entertained. Any well informed member of the parish will suggest names of new comers, and such as are seldom seen in church or do not figure on the pew-rent list. Some of these may harbor slight misgivings or prejudices; a pleasant interview with their pastor will brush these away. Others have been out of the Church so long, have "forgotten their confession prayers," and therefore dread the tribunal of penance;—here relapsing

sinners, no longer in the proximate occasion of sin, would be willing to make amends, but oh! that general confession!—but they all had to promise the kind Father who came to see them to go to the mission and there they are told how easy it is to make a good confession with the help of God's minister. They make another attempt and are saved. Some you will find who are waiting "just a little longer," are not yet ready; others, who are very poor, have no pew, nothing to offer, in fact no clothes fit to wear. Here are railroad men who would swear that they are unable to make the mission. Why? "Father, I must be out early in the morning," and "we are run very hard just now, the company have taken men off the road." Tell them they can receive Communion at 5 o'clock A. M. How often are such men able to secure substitutes for a day or so, or obtain permission to "lay off." Where there is a will there is a way.

Other preparations for the mission are to be made in the church edifice. It is of considerable importance to have the church well lighted during evening service. In the absence of electric light or gas, large coal oil lamps with reflectors, chandeliers, or at least some candles along the walls will and must answer the purpose. It is well to appoint ushers to take strangers to vacant seats and by all means to try to fill front seats first. Nothing is more annoying to priest and people, than to have late comers walk through the entire church in quest of seats during a sermon. The pastor should not omit to inform choir members that no new and extra grand Masses and solos are expected during the mission. The usual hymns, *Veni Creator*, *O Salutaris*, *Tantum Ergo*—all in *Latin*, of course, chaste, simple, church-like, sung briefly without many repetitions, but with great unction--help to bring the congregation nearer to God and leave salutary impressions upon the minds and hearts of all. A High Mass in the morning, at 9 o'clock or so, and in the evening at 7 or 7.30 Rosary, sermon and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, seem to answer the purpose of a mission. An extra effort at the organ during the solemn conclusion of the mission is, no doubt, befitting.

Not only previous to, but likewise during the mission, the zealous activity of the parochial clergy is required to some degree. In larger parishes, where but one missionary conducts the services, the pastor will try to procure help in the confessional. By taking the various states of life on successive days the rush will at no time be too great, yet it may be too much for one priest, especially when many general confessions are expected. It is perhaps the safest rule to invite one or two, who can be relied on, to hear in the afternoon and evening after the respective conferences—Tuesday P. M. married ladies; Wednesday, young ladies; Thursday, married men; Friday, young men—rather than invite numbers, and sometimes have a "crowded house" and no work, then again scores of penitents waiting and only one priest to dispose of. Lengthy admonitions need not be given to penitents who have just listened to a thorough explanation of their respective duties. Whether or not assistance is needed in the confessional, every pastor can easily ascertain from the missionary if he but mention the number of families or penitents that may be reasonably expected. If at all able, I like to hear them all myself during the five or six confession days. Children may be heard on the first Monday of the mission or in classes after morning service during the ensuing week.

In places where book-stores are not convenient, the devotional articles, viz., rosaries, scapulars, crucifixes, prayer-books, catechetical and instructive works—such as "Catholic Belief," "Catholic Worship," "Faith of Our Fathers," "Goffine," "Correct Thing for Catholics," "Short Lines," "Side Switches," "Notes on Ingersoll," "Lives of the Saints," "Catholic Almanacs," etc.—should be obtained at an early day and assorted in some suitable place, school hall, or any building near the church, where people can easily get all they need for private use and family purposes. It is necessary to emphasize the order for good, strong beads and crosses, no brittle ware, which can either not be indulgenced at all or easily lose the indulgence. When possible the pastor or an assistant priest should superintend the sale of books, etc. Half an hour before and after service will

suffice. A word from the priest in recommending a certain book or devotional to a parishioner, goes much farther than if a lady of the parish, or even a school teacher, speaks volumes in its praise.

From the beginning of the mission the pastor should demand promptness and regularity from all who are engaged in divine service in the sanctuary, sacristy, belfry and gallery, that Mass in the morning and Rosary in the evening may begin without delay at the time announced. Acolytes should not be permitted to remain in the sacristy during sermon to get the censer ready. This can be attended to while the large bell is tolled after sermon and three Our Fathers are said for the conversion of sinners.

It is well to make arrangements for the mission cross during the earlier part of the week, that it may be in readiness with suitable inscription or motto, when needed.

The mission over, the missionary's work is done, but not that of the pastor. The foundation is laid upon which the latter is to build up systematically, if the fruits of the mission shall last. Much depends upon a frequent and thorough renewal of spirit. This is brought about chiefly by a worthy reception of the sacraments. Young people should be urged to receive monthly, as they are exposed to more numerous and more violent temptations, and sorely stand in need of the counsels and directions a wise and vigilant confessor alone can give them. Mothers, as a rule, are pretty regular on general Communion day when the society members are expected. Married men might go at least once in three months. If, besides, the First Fridays are observed by the more fervent, the good spirit manifested during the time of the mission, is not in danger of evaporating so soon.

If it is arranged that the Forty Hours' Adoration is held annually in fall or winter, then even the most tardy of penitents will come to confession and Communion at least twice a year.

In regard to the sodalities, every pastor must know what he may reasonably expect from his people, young and old. I

do not believe that iron-clad rules will answer the purpose for all. How many a sodality could have been saved in principle despite a change in name, if some new, and by no means objectionable, feature had been seasonably blended with the old. Perhaps you can bring a circulating library, dramatic club, reading-room, lawn parties, literary sociables or some innocent amusement in connection with the same, and prolong its life and usefulness. A short devotion once a month, or quarterly, before the mission cross to obtain the grace of perseverance, will revive the memory of graces received and resolutions taken during the holy season. As a part of the penance enjoined on Confession Day, it is well to have the penitent read attentively the Souvenir of Remembrance he received during the mission.

GODFREY SCHACHTER, C.PP.S.

Carthagena, Ohio.

SUGGESTIONS HOW TO PRESERVE THE FRUITS OF A "MISSION."

BY THE PROVINCIAL OF THE CARMELITES.

WHAT ought a pastor to do, to render lasting the fruits of a mission? We have three kinds of people to deal with: the zealous, the easy going and the callous. As to the zealous there is no difficulty. They are themselves anxious to keep and develop any grace they may receive. Of the callous there are two species. One is indifferent through ignorance in religion, the other is hardened by vice and rejects grace when offered. The latter probably will not attend a mission, or only listen to some sermons without the intention of benefiting by them or approaching the sacraments. Some few come in a bad disposition, but are struck by grace, yield and for the future are zealous, or even zealots. The great difficulty lies with the easy going, those reeds shaken by the winds, who are always what the company is in which they find themselves. How can they be made steadfast? A complex question demands a complex solution.

1. The *ignorance in religion* is to be removed. Adults cannot be called to catechism like children, therefore *catechetical sermons* must take the place, and they should be within the realm of intelligence of the hearer, presupposing nothing, couched in plain, easy language, and leaving out all the subtleties, which perplex without enlightening. Personal experience proves to me, that such sermons are popular and fruitful.

2. *Association is necessary.* Societies ought to be called into existence, which give Catholics a chance to gather among themselves for amusement, instruction and recreation for the *whole* family. Confraternities are a good thing, but they hardly reach those to whom they would be most beneficial, and their influence in every day-life is very small, if we except the League of the Sacred Heart, which cannot be too highly recommended, and has converted whole congregations.

It appears to me, that the question of amusements for our Catholics has been too much neglected or treated in an one-sided manner. Catholics are told, with whom not to associate and what not to do, but no substitute is offered. As long as Catholics are men, they will desire some relaxation and amusement, and if not a Catholic one is offered to them, they will continue seeking forbidden ones. Frequent gatherings of Catholics would render religious ties stronger, help to overcome human respect, and favorably impress the outsider.

3. The zealous Catholic ought to act as missionary among the indifferent members. The words of a layman are often more efficacious than those of the priest.

4. Reading matter, cheap and suited to the individual taste ought to be introduced into the families. As it is impossible altogether to suppress light reading, the pastor should take care to substitute Catholic works. The same holds good of newspapers. If undertaken on a large scale, great blessing would result from such substitution, but I must confess I do not wish to ventilate the question, as our priests are hardly prepared yet to undertake such a great task

and carry it out successfully. Yet I am convinced that the principles advocated by our daily press are largely responsible for the tares, which we find among our wheat so soon after a mission.

These are a few hints which might prove useful to others in the pastoral charge. Much might be said in detail regarding each of the points mentioned, but it is hardly necessary for the accomplishment of a practical purpose for the thoughtful readers of the REVIEW.

PIUS R. MAYER, O.C.C.

New Baltimore, Pa.

PROTESTANT ZEAL IN MISSIONARY WORK.

SURELY it is unpleasant for a priest and a missionary to appeal to his brothers of the clergy and to those aspiring to the honor of the Sanctuary by contrasting Protestant activity with that of Catholics in America.

With a noble envy we may indeed point to the generous youths of France, who for three centuries have been fighting the Master's battle with the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God—in pagan lands. Countless missionaries have left that great country and done good service. "Gesta Dei per Francos" is still a true saying. But we are not the French and we have not their spirit. It cannot be said that the American is lacking in energy or in high-minded zeal; yet as Catholics we have shown but little of either quality in cultivating a large and inviting missionary field. There are hardly any American Catholics on the Foreign Missions; but a few, I believe, on the Indian, a couple in Alaska, while St. Joseph's Seminary and the Epiphany Apostolic College have about seventy in preparation for the Negro Missions.

To this let me contrast in the present paper one solitary movement among Protestants. It is the Student Volunteer

movement. At Detroit during March 1894, they held their second convention, the first preceding it in Cleveland, Ohio, by three years.

It was a convention of students gathered, let me repeat, in the cause of the Foreign Missions. In the Strait-city there were assembled eleven hundred youths, mostly all men —an insignificant fraction being women—and representing 300 Protestant institutions of learning in the United States and Canada.

Think of it, 1100, more than half the young men in our general Catholic Colleges according to Hoffmann's Directory—2,076 being their number—and eight times as many colleges (300 to 25) were present, in their delegates, as there are Catholic Colleges. Or again they equalled three-fourths the number of seminarians (1,100 to 1,457) we boast of in the land, and from five times as many institutions.

To this convention Yale sent 25 and Princeton 25 also. Should our Catholic Colleges try to equal its members, they would have to send half their boys. Fancy Mt. St. Mary's, Georgetown, Fordham and Notre Dame sending together half their households to some central point to discuss the Foreign Missions. Or suppose the Catholic Colleges would emulate the spirit of Yale and Princeton and send 25 a piece. We should have 625 Catholic boys gathering. A great sight surely! Mind you, those 1,100 Protestant young gentlemen who assembled at Detroit bore the cost. They paid the journeys to and fro, their hotel bills, and other expenses incidental to a trip. These facts are significant.

Those youths who assembled in Detroit have the same country as we, the same aspirations, the same sentiments except in religious matters. Some of them may have been our playmates and neighbors. How is it that we behold such a magnificent spectacle as the sight of 1,100 earnest, honest, manly boys meeting in the cold winter, traveling from Winnipeg and the Gulf, from Oregon and Maine to spread the glad tidings? "How beautiful the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things."

But more. Not only did 1,100 youths gather from the Protestant colleges of Canada and the United States, but leading men of the various denominations were there to lead and guide them. It is not a hap-hazard, go-as-you-please movement. Dr. Smith, Secretary of the American Missionary Board, a professor from Yale, and missionaries from Syria, India, China, Persia, Africa and Japan led the boys. At one time 60 professors from 40 different colleges held a special conference to advance the movement. And what did they do?

In the forenoon they studied the organization and its methods; the afternoons were given to the discussion of various kinds of mission works, evangelical work, medical work, woman's work, school work, Christian Endeavor, Epworth League, etc.; in all twenty-five subjects engaged their attention. A Rev. H. P. Beach, of Springfield, Mass., gave them points for practical preparation: The Volunteer is to be "all things to all men." He advised him among other things: "(1) to become acquainted with the officers, polity, and policy of his board; (2) to study his chosen field as to its strategic points, the climate, people, religions, the work accomplished, and the successes and failures, as pictured in missionary biographies; (3) to know something about keeping accounts, practical work at gardening, carpentry, etc.; (4) to study the laws of health, dentistry, preparation of the dead for burial, etc.; (5) to be able to use the camera, printing press and magic lantern, and know how to start industrial, normal and kindergarten schools; (6) to study to be an organizer and pastor; but, above all, to be skilled in personal work." This last point was frequently urged by the missionaries. The most effective way of winning souls is hand-to-hand, heart-to-heart work, and they insisted that men should begin at home and not wait until they reach the foreign field.

Every night the delegates held rousing-meetings, in which the claims of the various missions were discussed, as well as the conditions of success.

On the Sunday, which came during the convention, 34

Protestant churches had their pulpits filled by delegates. Let me add that the church where the convention met seats 1,500; but from the start there were steady overflow meetings in other churches.

The purpose of the movement was announced by the president in these words: "It is to lead students to a thorough consideration of the claims of the foreign missions upon them, to foster this purpose, to unite volunteers in an aggressive movement, to maintain an intelligent interest at home, but especially to secure a sufficient number of qualified men and women for the work of evangelization of the world in this generation." It is a little curious to note that a printed card, known as the "Declaration Card" was circulated, on which were these words: "*It is my purpose, if God permits, to become a foreign missionary.*" This card is the basis of membership, *ipso facto* by signing it, the volunteer becomes a member. The signers, however, were warned that it was no pledge, but a mere honest declaration of purpose.

Before speaking of the results, let us prefix the lines of policy as announced in the convention:

(1) Efforts to establish the movement in new sections and new classes of institutions, especially in young woman colleges.

(2) More thorough supervision of work already begun.

(3) More earnest, prayerful pressing of the masses of the unevangelized upon fellow-students;

(4) A more comprehensive course of study outlined.

(5) Increase in contributions.

(6) Keeping in close touch with volunteers already in the field.

(7) Most of all, absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit for life and light.

Very sensible speeches were made on the need of intellectual and spiritual and practical training. The results are particularly interesting.

The first convention was held at Cleveland in 1891. To-day there are 447 different institutions, which have the volunteer

movement; *i. e.*, about half as many more as were represented. About 50 per cent. more theological students have declared for the foreign missions than there were three years ago.

On their rolls they have 3,200 students. Now compare this number with ours. Hoffmann's Directory gives 2,076 students in our secular colleges and 1,457 in the seminaries; in all 3,533. In other words, the volunteers from Protestant colleges for the foreign missions are almost as many as the students in all the Catholic colleges and seminaries, or, for instance, twelve for every boy in St. Charles' College, Ellicott's City, Md. Of more significance is the fact that, of the 3,200 enrolled, 686 are actually on the foreign missions, laboring, according to their lights, away off in China, Japan, Oceanica, Syria and Africa. That is, one-fifth are in the front of battle. More Protestant missionaries have left America during the past two and a half years, than in the five and a half which preceded. We are told that during the past three years contributions have doubled, although no amount is given.

Let me now take up the arguments advanced for one mission, *viz:* China. The representatives of that field numbered upwards of 20. China has about seven times as many people as the United States. Of this vast number of human beings 1,000,000 die every month, *i. e.*, something over two a second. Four hundred million Pagans are there, among whom Christ our Lord wants His disciples to take His place as witnesses to His Divinity and Truth. When Christian, China will become a great evangelizing agency. The Chinaman was called a natural evangelist, no doubt intimating the spirit of zeal which the converts show. The result was that one-half of the volunteers ready to go out this year chose China for their field, *i. e.*, 26 out of 52.

The reasons alleged by the youths who volunteered are worth repeating: "Because I can't stay away;" "Because God wants me there;" "Because more are ready to take my place here than there;" "Because I have given my life to Christ, to be used where there is the greatest need;" "That I may not build on another's foundation." And a

Texan volunteer declared: "Because the need is greater there than in my own State."

At some length we have given an idea of this volunteer convention. The application which we make of it is obvious. By no flight of the imagination could we hope to see at a congress, assembled in the interests of Catholic foreign missions, so large, or even proportionally so large, a representation of Catholic colleges. Nor could we expect to see as large a number of representative men, Bishops, priests and laity prepare papers, make speeches, etc. No; we could not.

But, what good do these Protestants missions?

Before answering, let me correct some false impressions prevalent among us. They are that Protestant missions are what Marshall in his "Christian Missions" has painted them. Marshall's book is misleading.

Any of us can take almost any epoch in our own Church History and make out about as bad a case against the Catholic Church as Marshall makes against Protestantism. From my reading on the subject I am convinced that the great English Convert is not altogether reliable. He is a pleader, writing as if he held a brief. Priests who have been on the foreign mission in the East have assured me that countless prayers, devotions, Masses, offices, beads, are being offered up in chapels and convents in that far off land by Bishops, Priests, and Sisters, begging God to put into the hearts of American Catholic youth the same zeal and love of the heathen which animates their Protestant countrymen.

As far as my reading of history goes, heresy seems ever to have been missionary and agressive. To take just two instances. The conversion of the Goths was effected in the fourth century by Ulphilas an Arian, who was consecrated bishop by Eusebius of Nicomedia. At that time they lived on the Euxine. They continued Arian till the last years of the sixth century, that is, for two hundred years and over, during which they drifted from the Black Sea, where Ulphilas labored amongst them, to Spain, where they established the Gothic kingdom, that ended in Recarred becoming a Catholic while Gregory the Great was Pope.

The other instance is of our day. When in 1879 the Jesuits, sent from England to the Zambesi Mission, reached Bechuanaland, they found its king, Khama by name, and his people devout Protestants. There they also met the Protestant missionary, Mr. Hepburn and his wife, who had passed thirty years among those savages. All travellers agree in extolling the virtues of Khama. So honest are the Bechuana that the most precious things, such as gold watches, may be exposed without any risk or fear of theft.

What good do Protestants do? Water we know will never rise above its level; neither will Protestantism. To our mind the Protestant mission joined with the English language are doing the same work for Asia, and Africa and the Isles of the Pacific that the Roman Empire and the Latin tongue did for the Apostles. They are preparing the way, removing barriers, destroying prejudices. Their work is good by a natural goodness, even their handling of supernatural agencies, *v. g.* Scripture, Preaching or Baptism, is more of a natural modus agendi, than aught else.

We look upon it as a seed time, which with God's help the Catholic Church will garner. In this conclusion I was very much strengthened by my experiences at the Congress of Africa at Chicago. For nine days large gatherings thrice daily were held. Men and women, preachers and travelers gathered from the four quarters of the globe to discuss the Negro in all his bearings. There was no end of speeches, but the writer was the solitary Catholic among them all. No one can gainsay the earnestness of these speakers. They were full of Africa and gave indisputable proofs of how well they must have studied the Dark Continent and its mazes of problems and perplexities.

Furthermore, the dominant note was encouraging and could not fail to stimulate one like myself, to whom the cause of the black man, the world over, is most dear. Coming now to our Negro Missions, we see the same if not a greater disproportion of Protestant efforts as compared to Catholics. Our work is familiar to American Catholics. We form a Society whose members are ordained "sub titulo

Missionis," the object of a society being chiefly mutual support in our work and to have a staunch breakwater, by means of which to perpetuate the Negro Missions. St. Joseph's Seminary and the Epiphany Apostolic College are our training houses. The former has thirteen and the latter sixty students who are looking forward with eager joy to the Master's work among the forgotten Blacks. The want of zeal, fear, prejudice and human respect, are the great bugbears which deter many, but a courageous soul should overcome these. And the undaunted spirit of our non-Catholic countrymen should awaken a corresponding chord in the hearts of our Catholic youth.

J. R. SLATTERY.

St. Joseph's Seminary for the Negro Missions,
Baltimore, Md.

THE DIOCESAN CLERGY AND MISSIONS TO NON-CATHOLICS.

IT is growing daily more evident that the Catholic Church is winning its way to the better class of minds among our non-Catholic brethren. Any reasonable effort to gain a hearing for the Church's claims demonstrates a missionary opportunity.

The religious tendencies of the American people are manifest. They cling to Protestantism in spite of its shifting doctrines and shambling organizations because it offers them the sovereignty of Jesus Christ for their soul's salvation. According to the last census there are about thirteen millions of Protestant church members, and a moderate estimate of "adherents" would not fall short of a number three times as large. Nothing can account for this condition but the prevalence of a powerful religious sentiment, dominant, almost universal, among our non-Catholic countrymen—a determination to secure eternal happiness by obedience to the Gospel of Christ. The entire nation is eager for religion. Earnest and virtuous

men and women can win adherence everywhere to any form of Christian belief.

It is not mainly by family traditions, nor by social influences that the Protestant churches are kept up. It is by downright appeals to the religious sense of the people and by honest personal choice. The more worldly attractions are but adjuncts to the deep stirrings of religious aspirations.

It is pitiful to see how this fertile soil is wasted. Apart from the errors of the common run of sects, the most grotesque delusions gather followers if advocated by earnest men. Read this clipping, made last winter from a Detroit daily paper:

JOSEPH SMITH'S SON.

LATTER DAY SAINTS DEDICATE A COLEMAN TEMPLE.

And Joseph Smith, Jr., President of the Church, Officiated—His Father Founded the Mormon Faith—Largest Sect iu Coleman.

COLEMAN, MICH., Feb. 21.—Tne latter-day saints of this place have just dedicated their new church. The village was thronged with the faithful from surrounding towns, and an excursion train was run from Beaverton, where the saints have recently organized a society. The chief drawing card was Elder Joseph Smith, of Lamont, Ia., son of the prophet, Joseph Smith, founder of the faith

Elder Smith, "president of the high council and president of the church of the world," preached the sermon. For over one hour he held the vast audience spell-bound, and gave them a sound, clear talk on the principal lines of their faith.

It was about five years since the latter-day saints commenced operations here, and they have kept steadily increasing, until now they are the strongest society in Coleman, numbering 84 members. It was less than one year ago that they decided to build a place of worship and the building they have dedicated is free of debt, costing nearly $3,000.

Having repudiated polygamy the Mormons enter the field with no small chance of success. If this preposterous and till recently unclean sect, can win converts in a typical Amer-

ican community, what cannot the Church of the living God do? And why do the Mormons succeed? Not because of their errors, but because of their earnestness, and because of the fragments of religious truth they have. "Holiness to the Lord!" is their motto, and after holiness the people yearn. Only brigands or monsters are drawn together by untruth or vice. Our fellow-countrymen are allured to the various sects by promise of union with God, made to them by deeply earnest missionaries—union with God by pardon of sin and the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit. Many of them, indeed, if not most of them, change from one erroneous view of the great problems of life to another, and keep on changing. But there is every reason to believe that the Catholic Church with its unity of truth, its perfect rest of soul in the pardon of sin, its twofold union with God in the outer gift of the Holy Eucharist and inner touch of the Spirit, would win and hold them all. But this fulness of truth must be made known to them as their own sects have been—urged, pressed, thrust upon them by every missionary medium, and chiefly by that most resistless of all influences, earnest and devout men and women.

Everywhere in the rural districts (and this article does not refer to the larger cities) one hears of the missionaries of the various Protestant denominations. They hold meetings in the school-houses, they invite all to attend, and they plead for the love of Christ like men on fire. Nothing draws like Christ preached by a zealous man or woman. Then these rural "evangelists" go to the houses of the people, crave leave to pray with them and to read the Bible to them. The result is an increase of membership in the nearest church and often the formation of a new congregation. They organize the society, a minister is engaged, the country church is built, and so they continue for some years. But after a time, their children, if not themselves, are captured in the same way by a rival denomination, a Baptist missionary, a Methodist, a Campbellite, a Seventh-day Adventist, a Mormon, while you and I, brethren of the Apostolic Clergy, stand by and are content to laugh at the grotesque antics of

our deluded brethren, as they leap up for the fruit of the tree of life and grasp only the leaves. Would that all of us loved the fruit as earnestly as many of them love the leaves.

The school-house apostolate is an inviting one. There is no manner of doubt but that audiences almost wholly non-Catholic can be had in these arenas of all rural discussion. Of course conversion to Catholicity is a far different affair from the quick and fleeting results of emotional Protestantism. But it comes from learning the truth, and the truth we are bound to preach if we can get hearers.

They will come to hear us in public halls. I have preached over twenty missions to non-Catholics in public halls of small towns between September, 1893, and the following June. I always had a fair audience of Protestants, and in nearly every place a full house. They came from first to last because *they were fond of hearing about religion.* The little hand-bill, advertising the lectures, seen in the village post-office, or found in the wagon as the farmer started home was enough to draw many of them. Others gladly came at the invitation of a Catholic neighbor. The lectures and the answers to questions found in my query box were listened to with absorbed attention, and my leaflets and pamphlets willingly accepted. My experience is that of many priests in all parts of the country. "Last week," wrote a priest to me lately, "we spoke to a large audience of non-Catholics in a town where there are but two Catholic families."

It is not alone in darkest Africa but in brightest America, that missionary heroes are called for. And if you say the heathen are most easily converted, I answer yes, if you please; but I had rather hew the heavy timber of prejudice from the rich soil of an imperial civilization, and wait long for a harvest, than put the plough at once into the sand hills of complacent heathendom.

We do not claim that the conversion of this people will be immediate, though there have been in history sudden impulses of grace sweeping in many millions. Doubtless, long familiarity with Catholic faith and practice will be needed for the conversion of the average Protestant. *But all the*

sooner should we begin. A people whose civilization is daily growing more dainty, whose reasoning faculties have been hurt for religious investigation by the disappointments of Protestant uncertainty, who undervalue dogmatic exactness, whose instincts will feel the force of prejudice even after conviction shall have released their intelligence, who have suffered from the influence of a prodigious system of lying fables about Catholicity, by false history, and by false reports of our doctrines and usages—a people thus encumbered are not to be converted in a day. But they can be converted finally. They will listen to us, and every day we address them is so much time taken from the sum total of their banishment from the truth.

The conversion of America can best be done by the secular priesthood. I do not mean to compare community missionaries and secular ones with each other, nor the different states of life with each other. But I maintain that in America the bishop's priests have the best opportunity for making conversions. The state of life called the secular priesthood has its apostolic side. The diocesan clergy are a missionary body because the Church of Christ is essentially so, and they are its ordinary equipment. All will agree that the proper vocation of a bishop is to spread the faith in his diocese just as well as to maintain it, to win converts as well as to serve the faithful. And the bishop is but multiplied by his priests. It is an error to suppose that the secular clergy are the ordinary priesthood minus the *corps d'élite*, the latter being the community clergy. The *corps d'élite* of the Catholic church are the bishops, a distinctly apostolic body. The grace of the priesthood is itself essentially apostolic or missionary and becomes efficaciously so when associated by the diocesan organism with that of the bishop. He is the Apostle of his diocese. What is good for a bishop to do is good for him to have his priests do according to each one's gifts, and as far as their order allows.

Does not the bishop's office include going after the lost sheep? You answer, yes, just as truly as caring for those in the fold. Well, this means preaching and writing for non-

Catholics—functions confessedly capable of being participated in by the clergy. There are functions exclusively episcopal, but they do not embrace missions to non-Catholics any more than the care of souls in a parish. In the propagation of the spoken and written word the bishop is a leader of a host of co-workers. Will you not allow him a few priests for the teeming thousands of immortal souls deluded with error and many of them rotting with vice all around you? Even in the ruling of his church he has his vicars, his chancellor, his secretary, some of whom are so close to his office as to be called his "other self." And shall the bishops have no "other selves" for the many millions of non-Catholics scattered through our dioceses, or rather among whom our dioceses are scattered? Shall the canon law be better served for Catholics than the Gospel of Christ for non-Catholics? Shall we have no bishop's missionaries—not even one? The answer is the practical missionary enterprises actually on foot or in preparation in several of the American dioceses.

Of course one thinks instinctively of the religious communities in connection with this work, nor shall we have long to wait for them. They are in a special sense associated with the Apostolic See of Rome. But are they so much so as the bishops? What they are to the Pope by ecclesiastical law the bishops are by the divine law—and hence the same is to be said of the bishop's ordinary clergy. Not for many ages have Pope and bishop been so much to each other as in this age, and especially in America.

Moreover, converts will best be started by the clergy who must prepare them, instruct them, receive them into the Church and maintain them in perseverance. The starting of converts and their final reception should be of a piece and by the same priest, if possible, or be at least a family matter among the diocesan brotherhood. Seculars and seculars work well together. The Holy Spirit has given this generation many lessons of how much the divine brotherhood of the diocese can accomplish, in the canonization of John Baptist de Rossi, the miraculous life of the Curé d'Ars, the heroic character of such men as Bishop Baraga, the achieve-

ments of the members of the *Missions Étrangères.* Nor should the manifest tendency shown at Rome in the breaking down of barriers between the bishops and the communities be without its lesson to us.

No doubt the routine care (to use the term in its highest meaning) of the faithful will absorb the greater part of the energies of the parish priest. But this continual spiritual banquet can itself be given a mission savor. The onlookers of every creed and of none should always be taken into account, drawn to look closer, attracted to study the religion of Catholics. Are not the faithful buried in the non-Catholic mass as leaven in the lump? Each Catholic is the exponent of his faith for edification or for scandal. A missionary spirit is therefore called for as against one of indifference to outsiders in the routine work of a parish. Catholicity is not a secret society, it is a city seated on a hill.

Zeal for souls, meantime, is hurt by overzeal against error. Not that we should hate error less, but that we should love the truth more. When Protestants are gathered in your church at a Catholic neighbor's funeral, or marriage, or found present at some festival, you should say a kindly word of welcome to them, and many kindly words of exposition of the doctrines and practices suggested by the occasion. You may humiliate them if you like, and fill them with chagrin by railing at their errors, but only to embitter them against you and your faith. Positive evidence of Catholic truth, given in a kindly spirit, makes them their own accusers. Let the stated services of your church be made attractive by the order and beauty in the Sanctuary, by the sweetness of the music, especially by the kindly eloquence of the sermons—a quality made up of solidity of doctrine and the adornments of rhetoric. Emphasize the essentials. The indispensable means of salvation should ever be prominent, whereas we too often lay heaviest stress on the helps—preferring sometimes to preach on some particular devotion rather than on the Catholic doctrine which inspires it; advancing, for instance, some "popular" adaptation of the Eucharist rather than revealing its own infinite depths; preaching about the

saints in a spirit apparently forgetful of the sacraments and the virtues which made them saints.

Enlarge upon the virtues that can best be appreciated by those who are without the fold. How much can Protestants understand of the supernatural virtues, of the faith of Catholics, of their repentance, or of their divine charity? Just as much as you or your people will show forth by the practice of the natural virtues. Truthfulness, honesty, good citizenship, temperance, generosity, cheerful patience, loyal friendship, public spirit, hatred of bribery and corruption—if these qualities of true manhood and citizenship are made associates of any form of Christianity they are its best credentials among Americans. These are the missionary virtues. Make yourself and your congregation a powerful help to all manner of good living, and you will be no less a true parish priest than an effective missionary. Unite the welfare of religion and of the civil community in your purposes and conduct. This is the best union of Church and State anywhere; it is the only possible one in America. Take things as they are and try to better them in their own proper development, bringing to the work a sympathetic spirit and making yourself at home with all that is good around you.

I need not point out the missionary value of extra-liturgical services in English, the entire congregation singing and praying together, and entertained by a short instruction, doctrinal, devotional or historical. And once or twice a year a short course of lectures should be given in the church if Protestants will attend, otherwise in a public hall. Well advertised beforehand, delivered by the parish priest or one of his neighbors with the fire of deep conviction and with evidence of honest preparation, these discourses will do incalculable good. Such occasions are also excellent opportunities for distributing literature. As to the spirit which should inspire both out-spoken and written utterances to non-Catholics read the following extract from the Life of St. Francis de Sales.

"In 1594, when he was sent into the Duchy of Chablais, he found only seven Catholics at Thonon, its capital. He

labored there for five or six years, aided by his cousin, Louis de Sales, and in the end brought over to Catholicity between forty thousand and fifty thousand souls. His exertions seemed to meet with little success for the first four years; he lived in the midst of continual hostility; and sometimes his life was in danger from the fanatical Calvinists in those abodes of heresy; but his angelic sweetness and wisdom carried him through all. A pestilence which raged in Thonon enabled the servant of God to win the hearts of the people by his saintly charity, assisting the sick and dying at all hours, by day and night, and deterred by no fear of infection. The simplicity and gentleness with which he set forth the Catholic truth, gave him such power that, provided only a Protestant allowed him a quiet and peaceable hearing, he would make his objections disappear almost before they were stated. . . . . His method was always to have some particular object in his sermons, such as the explanation of some point of faith, or the inculcation of some virtue. He preferred rather to set forth the faith as if he were instructing Catholics only, without controversially disputing against objections; and by this means the heretics, who were very numerous, were gently led to perceive that texts on which they relied to defend their errors, rightly understood, only proved the truths taught by the Catholic Church."

Use the local press. Not a month will pass but that some opportunity will be offered for a plain statement, brief or at length, of the Catholic view of a point of morality, or of a social question, or of an historical difficulty. You are a citizen as well as a priest, and the union of these dignities should make you the foremost man in your community, especially in the press and on the platform. I lately asked a parish priest how he got along with the papers in his village. He smiled and said, "I am sub-editor of both of them." An educated man who is willing to contribute short articles with a strong moral tendency is a desideratum to the average country editor. And what a great missionary outlook the use of the press opens to you. But this, and much else that

I have here counselled, means that some members of the ordinary clergy must move out of some cherished ruts. If the Church is to become a missionary force we must have increase of missionary spirit.

Beware of minimizing your office. Priests and priests are not to be set off from each other as essentially different. The eternal priesthood is one, whether vowed more or vowed less. Whatever distinctions lawfully exist in the sacerdotal order as ecclesiastical states, they do not divide the priesthood either in dignity of office or call to perfection. All men who are ordained to offer the sacrifice of the New Law are made thereby members of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, one and indivisible, whose fullness is in the Episcopate. And of all legal preferences, none can compare with that which is due to the parish priest. He is more strictly the priest of the Pope and the bishop, being chosen for the ordinary care of souls. But that word *ordinary* is misunderstood if taken to exclude the care of the most necessitous of souls—the non-Catholics living in our parishes.

Never before were the bishops drawn nearer to the Popes than in our day; and hence the bishop's priests also are drawn, through them, to a larger and yet larger share of the privileges resulting from union with that See which is especially named the Apostolic See, and which is and ever has been the missionary centre of the whole world. Better than ever before can our Saviour say of us all, Pope, Bishops, priests and people. "I know mine and mine know me." Apostolic conditions are becoming more general in the Church every day with the development of the resources of modern civilization. The press, the facilities and desire of travel, the spread of education, the use of the mails and the telegraph, are golden opportunities for spreading the true religion. These advantages are God-given, and so is the implied command to use them for God's purposes. In such times as these, priests worthy the name, gather from the very air the grace of inspired zeal. Where in former times but one heroic soul struggled in isolated valor for hard fought triumphs, a thousand commonplace men,

enobled by their providential era, can now win easy victories.

The Catholic clergy are the very hinges of the ages. Relying on the clergy, the Church turns toward her straying children and invites them to return. And especially must all depend on those who are closely united to the bishops, if our Saviour's prophecy shall in our day be fulfilled, or led far onward toward fulfillment: "And other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." [1]

WALTER ELLIOTT.

Paulist Convent, New York City.

CONFERENCES.

ON THE INDEX.

(*Decret.* 8, *Junii 1894.*)

Among the works published under Catholic names and in a seemingly Catholic spirit, which have been recently placed on the Index of "Prohibited Books," we note the following, of two of which English translations have been announced:

Sabatier Paul.—Vie de S. François d'Assise. Paris, Libr. Fischbacher, 1894.

Rénan Ernest.—Histoire du poeple d'Israël.—Tom. iv et v. Paris, Colmann Lévy Edit. 1894.

Pieraccini Abbé Ant. Curé au diocèse d'Ajaccio.—Au delà de la vie. Fragments philos. theolog. sur les mystères d'outretombe. Saint Amand. Societé anonyme de l'imprim. S. Joseph, 1892.

Abbé Roques, archiprêtre de Lavaur. Aimer et Souffrir.—Vie de la R. Mère S. Thérèse de Jésus.—Appendice sur la vie et mort de M. l'abbé Roques.—Vues sur le Sacerdoce et l'oeuvre sacerdotale; (Extrait de la vie de la R. Mère S. Thérèse, abbesse du monastère de S. Claire—Lavaur). Publiée avec autorisation de l'Ordinaire.

1 This article was written before the publication of the last Encyclical *Praeclara gratulationis.* The writer is rejoiced to add his humble voice to the great acclaim with which all missionaries hail the venerable Pontiff's appeals to our separated brethren. W. E.

BOOK REVIEWS.

LETTERS OF ST. ALPHONSUS MARIA DE LIGUORI.—Part I. General Correspondence. Vol. III. (Vol. XX. of the Ascetical Works.—Centenary edition.) Translated from the Italian. Edited by Rev. Eugene Grimm, C. SS. R.—New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: Benziger Bros. 1894.

Of the numerous letters (considerably over a thousand) which have been thus far published in the present English edition, of the correspondence of St. Alphonsus, the volume before us contains some of the most interesting and of special value to the clergy. The majority of these are addressed to priests, religious and secular. They cover every variety of topic, and show us the Saint in all the charm of his familiar and friendly relations, whilst they teach us much about the uses of practical methods in the missionary life and in the direction of souls. As a matter of course St. Alphonsus comes before us mostly in the capacity of superior, either directing the members of his Congregation, or advising as bishop the secular clergy of his diocese. But he is as good as the lowest of his subjects when there is question of doing humble service, or a hope of resigning an honored charge. To Father Antonio de Paola who continually urges him to establish a house of the Order in Rome, for the purpose of strengthening the Institute, the Saint writes that he has no notion of doing so.

> We have but one thing to do: to live united with God, to observe our rules, to be charitable to every one, to be satisfied in our miseries, and, above all, to be humble, for a little pride can ruin us, as it has ruined others.

Although he greatly esteems this good priest, whom he had made superior of the house at Scifelli, he does not hesitate to point out to him his faults when there is question of benefiting the community which is apt to suffer from them.

> You must be very charitable towards them. I repeat the last injunction designedly, for your intentions are good and your conduct is irreproachable; but on the other hand your health is poor, you suffer from hypochondria, and this malady renders one disagreeable to the brethren. This was the only defect that was noticed in you, when you were rector at Sant' Angelo.

I compassionate you on account of your delicate state of health; but I beg you to endeavor to treat every one with meekness.

To a young priest who is overscrupulous and consults the Saint, he gives this answer:

I have read your letter attentively.

Here is my answer: Place yourself at the feet of Jesus Christ and say to Him: O Lord, I wish to do what is pleasing to Thee, and not what is pleasing to me. Jesus Christ will answer you: What pleases me is that you do what the Superiors command you. . . .

This ministry, you say, is for me a source of scruples. But, my dear Luigi, find me a confessor with a timorous conscience, who exercises his ministry without having scruples. If your mode of reasoning were correct, no one would hear any more confessions.

It is a rule, that after having heard confessions, the confessor should not think of what he has done. It is sufficient that he has not deliberately wished to commit an error, *I say deliberately.*

When Brother Alphonsus Maria, as the Saint frequently signs himself in his letters, is vexed with the folly or perversity of others he has a curious way of showing his temper. "May God make a saint of Father Maione!" he writes to P. Andrea Villani, because that good priest had misled the Saint into an awkward and serious mistake in an action toward the civil authorities. "I pray God to make them saints!" he writes to Stefano Liguori at Ciorani, who had informed him of the insubordination of certain priests. "I see very well, the devil has shown his horns; it is he that makes some act through passion and party-spirit." But he does not content himself with this pious wish, when there is need of severer expression. "Those subjects," he writes to the Fathers at Ciorani, "who render themselves useless (by their disobedience), and who cannot labor for the salvation of souls as their ministry requires of them, should be dismissed from the Congregation." He was as good as his word, and restored order by insisting on due respect being paid to legitimate authority, even though it was his own person that represented it; for, said he, "I wish to die a quiet death, and not to leave the Congregation an example of unpunished disobedience." (Letter 943.)

However, the correspondence is not altogether confined to the recommendation of virtues and the enforcing of ecclesiastical discipline. There are many which have a purely business character, and which show that the man of prayer and ascetic habits rather gained than lost by these in acute perception of the proprieties of

practical life. He gives pointed and sober advice about building, mortgages, even politics so far as they concern the interests of souls to be saved. He wants the clergy to pay their debts promptly, and not have tradesmen complain. Not even lawyers are exempted from his paternal interference in this respect. Thus we find the bishop write to the administrators of the Church of St. Nicola the following :

ARIENZO, EPISCOPAL PALACE, March 8, 1774.

GENTLEMEN :—Signor Alessandro Manto has complained to me of not having received sufficient fees for services rendered by him to the Church of St. Nicola, in his quality of advocate. You can, without difficulty, grant him an additional ten ducats; *require of him the usual receipt.*

The last words are significant, and show that the holy bishop was quite alive to the possibility of a lawyer making a new action out of the neglect of formalities in a bygone one.

The volume will be read with much interest. There must be some four or five hundred additional letters, which will complete this excellent edition of the ascetic works of the holy Bishop and Founder. The twenty-two volumes, with general alphabetical index and the Life of the Saint, make a complete library of which the priest may safely avail himself at all times for guidance in the direction of souls as well as for his personal sanctification.

THE LOVER OF SOULS. Short Conferences on the Sacred Heart of Jesus. By a Priest.—New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: Benziger Bros., 1894. Pp. 176.

Among the many excellent books written of late years to explain the devotion to the Sacred Heart and, at the same time, to animate the reader to the pious practice of it, few, if any, can be said to cover the practical purpose of the present Conferences. They are short and simple; yet the author is evidently a man of more than ordinary theological acumen and training. There is in his language likewise that sympathetic tone of personal devotion which begets conviction quite apart from the argument which the subject matter proposes.

The Conferences begin with the familiar exposition of Catholic devotion in its leading phases, set forth the various manifestations of divine love calling for a return of love, and point out the ways of corresponding to the divine call. Just a trifle didactic, especially in